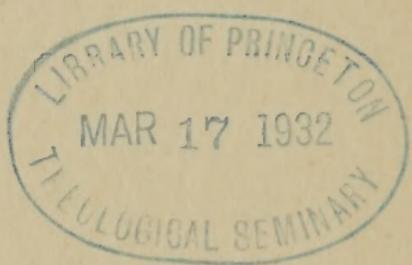


THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MASTER

P.T.R.



Division BS2420

Section P985

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF
THE MASTER

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

LITERATURE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT
(Now ready)

LITERATURE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT
In collaboration with Carl Everett Purinton
(Now ready)

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MASTER
In collaboration with Sadie Brackett Costello
(Now ready)

In Preparation

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ISRAEL

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MASTER

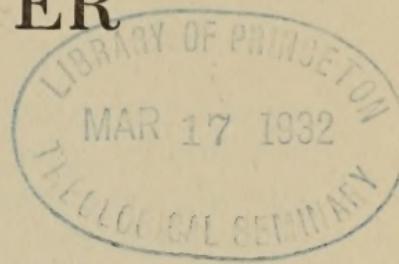
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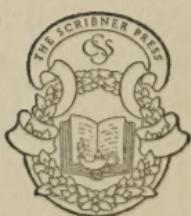
SADIE BRACKETT COSTELLO

NEW YORK
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1926



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PREFACE

What did Jesus do that made him the central figure of human history? Did he so far surpass all others in his deeds and teachings that he will occupy permanently the supreme place in the thought and love of mankind? Did he discover and express the infinite worth of every human soul? Did he show the way, open and free, to all mankind, by which a man could reach God? Did he describe and show by his own character what kind of a life the Heavenly Father wants every person to live? The aim of this book is to answer these questions anew for a generation that is seeking for facts in every realm.

For the past seven years the authors have tried to bring high school and college students face to face with the historical Jesus. They have used especially the three documents that present the earliest information about him—the *Gospel of Mark*, the *Sermon on the Mount*, and the *Letters of Paul*. The result has been a new sense of the actual achievements of the Master in both deeds and teachings. The methods suggested at the end of each chapter have proven their value. Having discovered the historical facts the students have been led to *realize* their spiritual meaning by a study of the best pictures and books, and to *apply* the principles thus discovered to actual cases in modern social and individual life.

Sadie Brackett Costello has contributed out of her experience of twenty years as teacher in a city church

school most of the descriptive and illustrative material of all the chapters. The undersigned has furnished most of the critical and historical material that was necessary in describing the background and the events of the life of Jesus. May those who read this book come to value aright the achievements of Jesus in individual character and thought and to appreciate "the incomparable significance of his personality as a force still working in history!"

HERBERT R. PURINTON.

LEWISTON, MAINE,

August 1, 1926.

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THE ACHIEVEMENT OF
THE MASTER

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MASTER

Part 1

PREPARATION

CHAPTER I

THE WORLD INTO WHICH JESUS CAME

Introduction. The Difference Jesus Made.

As a spring of clear water on the mountain brings health to the people in the valley below, so Christ brings happiness to those who live in regions where his teachings prevail. Among the most hopeless and desolate of the nations of earth to-day—Palestine, Egypt, and Arabia—are the ones which in the early centuries rejected Christ, while those that have tried to follow his teachings have been blessed above all others.

Let us call four witnesses that we may appreciate at its true value his influence on mankind.

First, the historian, George Holley Gilbert: “Tracing his way along the stream of Christian life back to its humble source in Galilee, observing what that stream has wrought across the wide expanse of years, the traveller comes at length to that far-distant spring with a mingled sense of awe and mystery. This stream of life, still rising slowly as it flows, has touched with hope a third of all the millions of mankind, and makes to grow along its banks the fairest things, the things of greatest promise, that we see in all the earth.”

Second, Thomas Carlyle, the great English author: "The life and death of the Divine Man in Judea (was) the cause of immeasurable change to all people in the world." An example of the changes caused by Jesus is the dating of modern history from his birth. Whether we profess to be Christians or not, we confess Christ in a sense whenever we date a letter.

Third, a great dramatist, George Bernard Shaw: "I am ready to admit that, after contemplating the world and human nature for nearly sixty years, I see no way out of the world's misery but the way which would have been found by Christ's will, if he had undertaken the work of a modern practical statesman."

Fourth, Richard Watson Gilder, late editor of *The Century Magazine*:

"If Jesus Christ is a man,
And only a man, I say
That of all mankind I cleave to him,
And to him I cleave alway.

If Jesus Christ is a God,
And the only God, I swear
I will follow him through heaven and hell,
The earth, the sea, and the air."

In this chapter we shall talk of the place where Jesus lived, and the conditions under which he did the deeds that are so transforming the world. A little study of maps, kings, and customs will help us understand him and his teachings.

I. Geography.

On the hill that rises behind Nazareth to a height of sixteen hundred feet the boy Jesus often stood and gazed, no doubt, at the blue Mediterranean plainly visible only twenty miles away. Could he have looked

across the sea toward the west to a distance of twelve hundred miles he would have seen Rome, the capital of the world and the centre of the power that was to put him to death on the cross. The Roman Empire, under the rule of Augustus Caesar, controlled all the provinces on the Mediterranean. Here approximately fifty million people dwelt in comparative peace from the beginning of the reign of Augustus (30 B. C.) to about 180 A. D. How little these people dreamed of the mysterious event that was to change the whole world!

Travel between the nations had begun to be a common thing. Excellent roads led from Rome to every province. Even to little Palestine the way was well known, for more than half a century before Christ Pompey had marched his armies to Jerusalem. On these fine roads many peoples mingled in a strange confusion of language and race. The seven thousand miles of paved roads around the Mediterranean not only made possible the work of Saint Paul but also increased the spread of Christianity by making it easy for Christians to move about from city to city and province to province. In this way the gospel of Jesus became known in every large city of the world. Universal law, universal language, and safe travel on the great highways had very much to do with the fact that in less than three hundred years the Roman Empire was converted to Christianity.

It was in a tiny province of this great empire that Jesus was born. Palestine, his birthplace, was at the eastern end of the Mediterranean. It was about the size of Vermont, or about one-third as large as the State of Maine. The length was no more than one hundred and fifty miles and the widest part of the land would not extend to a hundred miles.

2. Government.

From the birth of Jesus to the fall of Jerusalem, 70 A. D., the life of the little Jewish nation was a tragedy, ending with the slaughter of thousands of Jews and the destruction of their sacred temple. That King Herod was cruel is shown by the story of his murder of the children in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16). He not only taxed the people heavily and murdered many leading citizens of whom he was suspicious, but also interfered in most provoking ways with the religious life of the Jews.

An example of the bitter feeling against Herod is the affair of the Roman Eagle which the king had placed above the gate of the temple. A group of young Jews became excited over the matter and pulled down the eagle. Herod murdered these young men and later his son Archelaus, who had become king, enraged by the mourning for these murdered Jews, killed three thousand more. Archelaus was removed and Pilate made governor. That is how it happened that Pilate had charge of Judea in Jesus' time.

But even under a Roman governor life was almost as oppressive as under a Czar of Russia. Everybody had to pay annoying taxes. There were import and export duties, tolls in the market-place on food and clothing, land taxes and poll taxes. The tax-collectors, called publicans, were hated and despised especially because they overcharged the people so much. No one can appreciate Jesus and his teachings without recalling that question which was uppermost in the minds of the people: "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?"

Besides the constant fret of the taxes there was the presence of the Roman soldier in uniform to remind the Jews of their subjection to the heathen power. Jesus

had to solve his own personal life problem in view of this central problem of his people—the overshadowing dominion of Rome which was soon to lead to his nation's doom. As Lincoln's career was determined by the awful tragedy of the Civil War, so, in a measure, it is true of Jesus, that his career was conditioned by the ceaseless struggle of the Jews with the Romans.

3. Curious Notions Held by the People of Jesus' Time.

Every age has its own science, which is but another name for the explanation of things. The people of Jesus' day believed the earth was flat and the sky was a metal dome above it (Job 37:18 and 38:18). This flat surface was circular in form, the circle being the meeting-place of sky and sea (Job 26:10, Proverbs 8:27, and Isaiah 40:22). Palestine was the centre of the circle and Jerusalem was the centre of Palestine. The future abode of the dead, whether good or bad, was in Sheol, which was located in the lowest part of the earth. There the shadow of death reigns, and there are no glimmers of daylight, and from it there is no return (Job 10:21, 22). In the time of Jesus the upper part of Sheol was called "Abraham's Bosom" and the lower part Gehenna, where sinners were tormented in flames (Luke 16:22-28).

The people believed that the world was full of little invisible demons more powerful than man. One day when Jesus was on the east side of the Sea of Galilee "there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. . . . And always, night and day in the tombs and in the mountains, he was crying out, and cutting himself with stones. . . . He (Jesus) said unto him, come forth, thou unclean spirit, out of the man . . .

and the unclean spirits came out and rushed into the swine" (Mark 5:1-13). These demons could cause sickness, insanity, and make a man speak in ecstasy. The writers of the New Testament do not explain whether Jesus believed in demons, but they tell many stories about his casting them out.

4. Moral Bankruptcy.

Seneca describes Roman immorality in much the same language as Saint Paul (Romans 1:24-32). "All things," says Seneca, "are full of crimes and vices; daily grows the appetite for sin; daily wanes the sense of shame. Iniquity is given such a range in public, and is so mighty in the breasts of all, that innocence is not merely rare; it has no existence." Seneca himself, while he gave good advice to others, added to his fortune by loaning money at excessively high rates of interest and by writing false praises of the Emperors Claudius and Nero.

These two emperors wasted the people's money on luxury. Caligula spent half a million dollars on a single day's banqueting. Nero built a palace in which was a circular banquet room which revolved perpetually day and night, in imitation of the motion of the celestial bodies. The supper rooms had ceilings with compartments inlaid with ivory, which were made to revolve and scatter flowers and to sprinkle costly perfumes on the guests. When Nero made a journey he had a retinue of a thousand carriages and the animals were shod with silver.

One of the evils of the time was the corruption of family life. Divorces were very common. The practice of infanticide was frequent. One Roman judge, Paulus, decided that parents had the right to put newly born

children to death if they desired. Roman theatres pandered to the depraved taste of the populace. Gladiatorial shows were made exciting by inhuman spectacles in which captives in war were compelled to fight with wild beasts. One writer has shown that this wretched state of morals, though in many ways unfavorable to the coming of Christianity yet, on the other hand, created a demand for such teachings as Christ came to give.

5. A World Full of Religions.

The low state of morals which we have been describing does not imply a lack of religious systems. The old state religions of Rome and Greece were carried on in great splendor by hired officials. Temples, in which many gods were worshipped were very numerous. Every tribe and nation in the provinces of Rome had one or more religions. In Palestine Judaism held sway; in Persia there was Zoroastrianism; in India, Hinduism. But what the world needed was a new way of life, and a new idea of the present life and the future.

Before Christianity reached Rome three great emotional religions had been brought in to meet this need. Mithraism, the worship of the sun-god, came to Rome from Asia Minor. Because of its exciting character it was accepted, among others, by many soldiers. Converts were baptized in the blood of a bull. Meetings were held in a small, underground chapel. Full membership was attained by seven successive initiations. They had in addition to baptism a sort of communion meal, and members were sealed on the forehead, as Christians were sealed with the sign of the cross.

Another popular religion was the worship of Isis and Osiris. A vivid reminder of this rival of Christianity

may be seen to-day in the little temple of Isis at Pompeii. Isis worship came from Egypt and was so popular in Rome by 58 B. C. that the consul Gabinius stopped the building of any more altars to this goddess. But no official decrees could prevent the devotion of the masses to this Egyptian faith. They had little images of Isis that remind us of the Christian Madonna and Child. The worship in the temples was most attractive to women, for it gave them the assurance of a happy future life by its teaching about Osiris who was dead but who is alive again. The priests gave their whole time to the service of these gods, and there was something for the worshipper to do every day. They had a sort of passion play in which the death and resurrection of Osiris were pictured. It was enacted once a year in Rome, beginning October 28, and lasting seven days. Another feature was a kind of revival meeting on the street corners conducted by a priest of Isis, who carried the paraphernalia of worship on a little cart and rang a bell to call a crowd around him.

The Mystery Religions met the emotional needs of many people whom the state religions of Rome failed to help. The best known Mystery was the Eleusinian which had its centre at Eleusis, near Athens. It had baptism, communion, and sacred festivals. The scene at the final act admitting converts to membership made a powerful appeal to the feelings. Paul referred to the Mysteries several times in I Corinthians, Colossians, and Ephesians.

In these three rivals of Christianity there was a great appeal to the common people in two ways. First, they brought the worshipper into personal, sympathetic relations with a god. This meant that there was an emotional element in the worship. Second, they as-

sured the worshipper of immortality. Christianity surpassed these powerful competitors and won the Roman Empire because it had a superior belief, a higher morality, and conferred a greater joy.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Give an example from national life of the difference that Jesus has made. Quote Gilbert.
2. In what ways had the Roman Empire prepared the way for the rapid spread of Christianity?
3. Give the story of the Roman Eagle as an example of Herod's treatment of the Jews.
4. Show how intimately the Roman government touched the life of the Jews in the matter of taxes.
5. What was the cause of disease according to the people of Jesus' day?
6. Give two or more examples of the moral bankruptcy of the social life.
7. What three emotional religions had many followers in the Roman Empire?
8. Why did Christianity win the empire over these competitors?

Oral Discussion

1. Quote from memory Richard Watson Gilder's verses about Christ.
2. How did Pilate happen to be governor of Judea in the time of Jesus?
3. How did the political subjection of his people to Rome affect the life of Jesus?
4. Why was the luxury of Nero a public evil?
5. Describe the ancient notion of the world.

Special Assignments

1. Draw an outline map of the Roman Empire and locate Rome, Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch.
2. Read *Quo Vadis* by Sienkiewicz for the light that it throws on social life in the Roman Empire.
3. Write an account of the passion play of Osiris. See Breasted, *History of Egypt*.

CHAPTER II

THE RELIGION WHICH JESUS INHERITED

1. A Striking Contrast.

It has been said that the Jews got religion ready for the world, the Greeks prepared the language-vehicle in which it could safely be carried, and the Romans built the roads over which religion could be quickly sent to the limits of civilization. Jewish religion was the most important of the three gifts. From it sprang the world's two most powerful faiths, Christianity and Mohammedanism. What gave Judaism such power and such endurance?

One noticeable thing is the strange contrast between the Jews on the one hand and the Greeks and the Romans on the other. In Palestine life was serious and humble; in Rome life was gay and luxurious. Where Rome had grand temples and gorgeous religious processions, Palestine had unpretentious synagogues and a very lowly and simple religious life in home and village. It was this serious and humble religious life which Jesus inherited.

2. Home and Synagogue.

What an impression the customs of the Sabbath and the simple services in the rustic synagogue must have made upon Jesus' mind! The Sabbath service was the only excitement of the week. Just before sunset Friday every household was in a hurry to finish the last things.

No work at all was permitted after sunset. Even the minister of the synagogue who, standing on his roof, announced the opening of the sacred day by blowing three times on a trumpet dared not profane the day by carrying the trumpet down from the roof. In the homes no fire could be built, no lamp moved, no insect killed, no fruit carried in the hand, no writing could be done or stitches taken. If a letter was to be sent, it must not be started as late as Wednesday or Thursday unless it was certain that it would reach its destination before the Sabbath. No one was to go about with false teeth lest they fall out and the wearer pick them up and carry them in his hand, which would be sinful. If a hen laid an egg on the Sabbath, it was not lawful to eat it.

For the great majority of Jews the temple in Jerusalem was too far away to serve as a real centre of worship. About the time of Judas Maccabeus there grew up in the cities and villages of Palestine many synagogues, which were places for the study of the Jewish Scriptures and for religious exhortation. They might be compared to our Sunday-schools, because the reading and study of the Scriptures had first place in them. The word "synagogue" means meeting-house, and one could be built wherever ten men agreed to support it. On the Sabbath it served for a Bible school and on week-days for a police court (Mark 13:9).

By the time of Jesus the element of worship had become a regular part of the synagogue activities, so that when the temple was destroyed in 70 A. D. the religious life of the Jews suffered no great loss, for by that time there was a synagogue in every village and many synagogues in the larger cities. One reason why there was little if any loss when the temple was de-

stroyed was the fact that the service of worship in the temple alluded to in Ecclesiasticus 50:16-26, but nowhere fully described, was transferred to the synagogue.

This love for the temple was early given to the synagogue, which was from the beginning not a duplicate of the temple in its purpose but parallel to it. It was a place where one could listen to the word of the Lord, where those who were able could read and expound the Old Testament. These lessons from the law were conducted not in a perfunctory manner as to-day, but intelligently, so that the law was understood by the people. The words were not only read, but explained. Later on the Hebrew language was succeeded by the Aramaic, and for the people at large it was necessary to translate the reading into Aramaic.

The need of translating and explaining the Scriptures led to the sermon. There was no regular preacher or priest connected with the synagogue. The service could be conducted by anybody. Whoever chose could step forward and read; then anybody who sat in the audience and felt that the spirit moved him was permitted and encouraged to step forward and give his message, and all listened to him. In time the reading in the synagogue developed into a chant. Then the chant developed into a formal service to which the people did not pay much attention.

3. The Great Passover Feast.

One of the memorable experiences of a Jewish boy was the celebration of the Passover. The Sacred Book had commanded: "Keep the passover unto Jehovah thy God; for in the month of Abib, Jehovah thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night. And thou shalt sacrifice the passover unto Jehovah thy God,

of the flock and the herd, in the place which Jehovah shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there." (Deuteronomy 16: 1, 2). With untiring devotion the Jews from all over Palestine went up to Jerusalem every spring for the chief feast of the year. While it was not quite like our country fairs in their hilarity, yet it was a time of pleasure and the holiday spirit was abroad.

Boys would not go up to Jerusalem to the Great Feast until they had become "Sons of the Law," that is, until they reached the age of twelve or thirteen and became responsible members of the congregation. The first time a boy went on the annual pilgrimage with his parents and neighbors he would join in the singing of the pilgrim hymn with deep feeling, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalm 122). We can imagine the scene when the caravan of worshippers from Nazareth made their first camp on the east of the Jordan near the valley road. Around the camp-fires stories were told and psalms sung. One of the older men would recall a journey many years ago when a pilgrim group was attacked at night by robbers. After such a story the younger boys would observe with big eyes the arrangements for the men to take their turns for keeping watch, for robberies were very frequent in Palestine in those days. As they sang their good-night hymn they would see practical meaning in the words:

They that trust in Jehovah are as Mount Zion
Which cannot be moved but abideth forever.

As the mountains are round about Jerusalem,
So Jehovah is round about his people (Psalm 125).

As the pilgrims travelled down the valley road, snow-capped Mount Hermon rose behind them. Later they

came to the Jabbok, where Jacob had wrestled all night with an angel and gained the name Israel, "Prince of God." They passed many historic scenes concerning which there was much talk among the Jews, and the boy Jesus would see the places which he afterward made famous: Jericho, Bethany, and the Mount of Olives. Such journeys amid the scenes of the romantic history of Israel were an important part of a Jewish boy's education.

Bethany was on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives and was the home of the three young people who later became intimate friends of Jesus: Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. It may be that Jesus' family stopped with them the last night of the journey. If so, it is possible that Jesus went to the crest of Olivet to catch his first glimpse of the Holy City. The view of the towers and domes of Jerusalem from Olivet at sunset is wonderful even to-day. Before Jesus lay the Brook Kidron and just this side of it an old garden of olive-trees which Jesus was to make forever sacred. Rising up beyond Kidron were the ramparts of Jerusalem and higher still the white walls and golden roof of the Temple of Herod.

The next day within the walls the family or group of families would buy a paschal lamb, which had to be killed at the temple by the priests. Jesus' first visit to the cathedral of Jewish faith was at passover time when everything was to be seen at best advantage. The scene must have been impressive to one standing in the Court of the Men. The processions of priests in their white robes, the fires on the great altar, the music of the temple choirs, and the waving in the wind of the colored curtain that hung before the entrance combined to make a picture that would never be erased from a

youthful mind. Above all was the high priest grand in appearance,

“When he put on his glorious robes
And clothed himself in perfect splendor,
When he went up to the altar of majesty
And made glorious the courts of the sanctuary.”

From many nations thousands and thousands of pilgrims streamed into Palestine after extensive journeys by land and sea to offer sacrifice in this holy place. When these were added to the people from the homeland it made a picturesque host. One who had once mingled with that throng and heard the tones of the silver trumpets and the music of the chorus and the temple bands might be pardoned for saying he would like “to dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” Jesus had a real affection for the temple, for as a boy he is reported to have said that his parents should not have hunted for him elsewhere in the city, for they should have known that “I must be at my Father’s house.” Only four or five days before his crucifixion he drove the traders out, and quoted Scripture, saying, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations, but you have made it a den of thieves.”

4. The Temple.

In a little land like Palestine the national temple at Jerusalem would be the outstanding feature. When Jesus saw it for the first time he was twelve years old, that age when boys are most open to new impressions. Let us try to see this greatest of Jewish institutions as he saw it.

It was a beautiful marble church on a marble platform about a thousand feet long and a thousand feet wide. The front of the temple, facing the east, was

covered at least in part with plates of gold. The pilgrim coming from Galilee to the Passover Feast by the valley road would have a wonderful view of the front of the temple as he reached the brow of the Mount of Olives at the point where the city of Jerusalem came into sight. At this point Jesus, as he journeyed from Bethany on the Sunday of Passion week, wept over the city. Standing there one could look over the wall, forty-three feet high, which surrounded the three temple courts and see the costly gate of Corinthian bronze, called the "Gate Beautiful," which opened from the Court of the Women into the Court of Israel.

Inside the gate was the temple with space around it. That part of this space which was in front of the temple was called the Court of the Men. To the right as you entered was the great altar of sacrifice. Directly in front was the temple, one hundred and twenty feet long and ninety feet wide with a façade rising one hundred and twenty feet into the air, and so wide that it extended thirty feet beyond the front on each side.

The Gospel of Luke tells an interesting story about Christ talking with the rabbis. This incident took place, no doubt, as Hofmann in his *Christ and the Doctors* pictures it, in one of the porches formed by the lofty marble columns on the great marble platform. So not only the beauty of the building and the worship influenced Jesus, but also the teachings of the doctors who lectured in its courts.

5. Religious Parties that Influenced Jesus' Career.

A great deal is said in the Gospels about the Pharisees and the Sadducees. They were the two most powerful parties in Palestine; the first religious and often devotional, the second political and worldly. The *scribes*

were the scholars and teachers among the *Pharisees*, and it was they who opposed Jesus from the first. They believed that God's inspiration did not cease with the written law in the Old Testament, but continued in their oral explanations of the written law. Their numerous additions to the Law of Moses were just as binding on men as the written law. This was what started the trouble between them and Jesus.

The *Pharisees* were the descendants of those who had opposed the Greek influence in Palestine in the time of the Maccabees. They stood for literal belief in the religion of their fathers, in the future life, and an unseen world full of spirits, good and bad.

The *Sadducees* were successors of those who had favored the foreign and liberal ideas in the time of the Maccabees. They did not believe in adding to the Law of Moses, rejected the belief in immortality and an unseen world of spirits. Most of the wealthy Jews were Sadducees because that party favored the Roman government, which helped maintain good business conditions.

The *Herodians* were evidently members of a small party of royalists that favored the family of Herod. The *Zealots* were extremists who eagerly sought occasion to throw off the Roman control of the Jews by violent action.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. What was the most noticeable difference between the life of the Jews and the Romans?
2. Describe the scene in Jesus' home and neighborhood on a Friday afternoon as sunset approached.
3. How would the journey to Jerusalem to attend the Passover affect a boy's religious life?

4. What hymns would be sung; what stories told?
5. Why is Jesus' boyhood visit to Bethany so full of suggestions for us?
6. What could Jesus see of Jerusalem at his first glimpse of it from the top of the Mount of Olives?
7. As Jesus stood in the Court of the Men during the Passover what memorable things did he see?
8. Give several reasons why Jesus' religious life would be influenced by the temple.

Oral Discussion

1. Compare the preparation for Christianity made by the Jews, Greeks, and Romans.
2. One difference between the temple and the synagogue.
3. At what age did a boy become a member of the Congregation of the synagogue?
4. What event did the Passover celebrate? Is the Passover now observed?
5. What was the difference between the Pharisees and the Sadducees?

Special Assignments

1. The origin of the synagogue. See Edersheim 1: 431-434.
2. Visit an orthodox synagogue and describe the formal character of the service.
3. Study Hofmann's *Christ and the Doctors* and describe the expression on the face of each person in the picture.
4. Write a description of Psalms 120-134 as hymns for the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem.
5. Read Bulwer Lytton's *Last Days of Pompeii* for a better understanding of religious conditions in the first Christian century.

Part 2

OPENING EVENTS

CHAPTER III

THE HERALD OF THE NEW ERA

Mark 1: 1-8.

I. A Strange Prophet.

One day there appeared by the River Jordan a hermit from the barren regions of Judea preaching a startling message. He declared that the great day foretold by the prophets had come at last and that everything was to be changed. People crowded about him, attracted both by his unusual appearance and by his eloquence. His powerful young figure was clothed in the skins of wild beasts, he was brown and rugged and his hair and beard were uncut. He ate only wild honey and locusts.

The people were excited because he reminded them of the Messiah which the Old Testament had predicted. They expected a bold, intense leader who would overthrow the government and place the Jews in power. They asked John if he was the Messiah. He said that he was not, but that he had come to help them prepare for the coming of that one.

“What then shall we do?” the people asked.

And he answered: “The man who has two shirts must share with those who have none.”

"How does this apply to me?" asked one who was a tax-collector.

"Stop overcharging the poor. Ask a fair amount of taxes."

A soldier was interested and John turned to him: "Instead of trumping up false charges for purposes of blackmail be satisfied with the wages from the government."

2. John Represented the Best in Old Testament Religion.

John will always be regarded as an important historical character because he stands in the gap between the Old Testament and the New. Jesus is reported as having given the following estimate of John: "Among them that are born of women there is none greater than John" (Luke 7:28). His greatness largely consisted in his work of transferring to Christianity the essential elements of Jewish religion. In the last chapter of our Old Testament we read: "Behold I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come" (Malachi 4:5). In the first paragraph in the Gospels (Mark 1:4) we read that "John came who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins." He brought over from the prophetic religion five things: God, lofty morals, demand for repentance, social justice, and the exalted ideal of the home life.

3. His Home and Boyhood.

Luke reports that John's father Zechariah was a priest and his mother Elizabeth was a very devout woman. They lived in a quiet place in southern Judea, for the father's duties in the temple occupied only two

or three days a week. The birth of John was celebrated in a hymn, the *Benedictus* (Luke 1: 68-79), now one of the greatest hymns of the Christian church.

And you, my child, will be called the prophet of the Most High,
For you will go before the Lord to make his way ready,
Bringing his people the way of salvation
Through the forgiveness of their sins.

An element of romance is added to the account by the story of the visit of Mary to Elizabeth shortly before the births of Jesus and John.

Like the childhood of the Master, John's early days are unrecorded save for the report in Luke that "the child grew and waxed strong in spirit." In almost the same words the growth of Jesus is described (compare Luke 1: 80 and 2: 40). Our imagination can picture him as a boy among the hills overlooking the Dead Sea. There is a charm in the barren steeps and long waste stretches, a deathly stillness of the great waters without life which would incline the youth to meditation. In a similar way the deserts of Egypt moved the monks of the Christian church, like Saint Anthony, to think of God and devote their lives to his service. John read the scrolls of the Prophets and under the bright stars of the oriental night he thought over the evils of the great cities of his time, until it seemed to him that the time had come that the prophet Malachi foretold when a revenger would come to condemn the people (Malachi 3: 1). The conviction grew that he ought to go to the people of his land and preach "repentance for the remission of sin."

4. Excitement concerning the Messiah in John's Day.

John said: "There cometh one after me that is mightier than I. . . . He shall baptize you with the Holy

Spirit." No explanation was given, for every one who attended a synagogue would know that it meant the Messiah. All Jews were familiar with the prophecy that King David's throne should be established forever (II Samuel 7:16) and that in the future "shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed" (Daniel 2:44). Every child in Palestine had been taught the glowing words of Isaiah, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end" (Isaiah 9:6, 7). To the poor and oppressed this meant that the Messiah would "have dominion from sea to sea," and that he would change human society so that justice and happiness would be enjoyed by those who had been downtrodden (Psalm 72:4-8). The Jewish "idea of the Kingdom of God was no Greek sweet dream of a past golden age, but an intoxicating belief in a new state in which righteousness was to reign" (Mathews, *Messianic Hope in the New Testament*).

While John was a boy the following poem appeared in Palestine:

And then his kingdom will appear throughout all his creation,
And then Satan will be no more,
And sorrow will depart with him.

For the Heavenly One will arise from his royal throne,
And he will go forth from his holy habitation
And his wrath will burn on account of his sons.

For the Most High will arise, the Eternal God alone,
And he will appear to punish the Gentiles,
And he will destroy all their idols.

(Assumption of Moses 10:1, 3, 7.)

This was written by a Pharisee who believed in the direct intervention of God. God would by a miracle

overthrow the Roman government and establish the Messianic Kingdom. When John began to preach there was a party called Zealots that took a different view from that of the Pharisees. They held that a military revolution was necessary in order to establish the Messianic Age. In the end the Zealots won the majority of the people and the result was that Rome sent an army and destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A. D.

While the revolutionists in the north of Palestine were urging the Jews to rebel against Rome, John was preaching repentance to the people in the south. He taught that the Messiah would not come until a religious and moral preparation had been made. In this he was a true forerunner of Jesus, for Jesus took this religious attitude rather than the political. From time to time pressure was brought to bear upon him to become a political leader, lead his people to victory against Rome, and end slavery, poverty, and the wicked manners and customs, including the public games so harmful to the morals of the Jewish youth. Jesus, as well as many of the people, knew that the senators at Rome and the royal court rolled in the lap of luxury yet nothing was done to relieve the burdens in Palestine. Spiritual life was his interest. It was not until late in his public career that Jesus admitted that he was the Messiah in any sense, and when he did acknowledge Peter's great confession (Matthew 16), he immediately added the statement (verse 21) that he was the kind of a Messiah that would have to die to win. The gaining of this new insight concerning the meaning of the Kingdom of God had cost Jesus many a struggle from the time of his temptation in the wilderness until that historic scene at Cæsarea Philippi. His solution of the problem, hinted at in Isaiah 53, "became the most universal

achievement in the annals of mankind" (Simkhovitch, *Toward an Understanding of Jesus*). Jesus perceived that the Kingdom could only be within the souls of men. Israel could be left free to develop that spiritual life, so well exemplified in the life of Jeremiah, only by humility and non-resistance. On the basis of this idea Jesus developed some fundamental truths that to-day reveal "his intellectual grandeur and the purity and unswerving consistency" of his thinking. Because they could not understand him they put him to death, but his death in the end won the world, or bids fair to win the world, to his view. It is this new insight of Jesus into religion that gives the Sermon on the Mount its great influence in the modern world; in his parables he put his new ideas in the form of pictures; combined, they constitute a religious message that is irresistible.

5. Two Chief Contributions of John to Religion.

He recalled his people to the moral standards of the great prophets of Israel: Amos, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. When his nation was looking for miraculous help out of all their difficulties he recalled them to the eternal truths which must underlie every permanent life, national or individual, "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8).

John's second contribution was a new meaning for baptism. Baptism was a common custom not only among the Jews but throughout the world. Other religions had already used it as a sign of spiritual cleansing. What John said was that they could not be baptized until they had repented. It became the symbol of purity of soul, of a new birth in a certain sense. Josephus wrote that John employed baptism for puri-

fying both body and soul. This shows that John held that an essential condition for the coming of the Messiah was individual repentance and confession. On the other hand, the prophets regarded national and social repentance as the essential principle (Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 246, 247). This is our Christian belief and we owe it to John.

While John was like Jesus in much of his teaching, yet his neglect of the principle of love left much to be desired. Longfellow's lines well represent the difference:

“A voice by Jordan's shore,
A summons stern and clear:
Repent, be just, and sin no more
God's judgment draweth near!

A voice by Galilee,
A holier voice I hear:
Love God, thy neighbor love ! for see,
God's mercy draweth near.”

6. The Tragic Ending of John's Life.

Soon after Jesus appeared John was arrested for condemning Herod, who had married Herodias, his brother's wife. For many months he was in prison in the castle of the king which was nearest the scene of his preaching, the fortress of Machærus. From his dungeon he sent messengers to inquire whether Jesus was really the expected Messiah. He must have wondered why some miraculous aid had not freed him. But Jesus knew that it was best for the kingdom that political miracles should not be worked, for that would lead to violence and political revolution. Some time later, according to Mark 6:14-29, at a banquet, Salome, daughter of the queen Herodias, danced before the king. To reward her he asked what gift would please her most. After consulting her mother she replied,

“the head of John the Baptist.” And the king commanded a soldier of his guard and he brought the head of John on a platter, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother.

7. The Humility of John.

Phillips Brooks once defined humility as the ability to see yourself as you are, not thinking too little of your worth, or too much. That is a valuable quality. One who underestimates himself fails to win a right estimate from others; one who thinks too much of himself makes many enemies and creates unnecessary opposition. John was in a position to claim an office that belonged to a greater man, but he was content to fulfil his own mission (Luke 3:15-17; John 1:19-23). He was willing to be a “voice” heralding the Master who was to follow. This was one reason why Jesus called him great (Luke 7:28).

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Name two or more unusual things in the appearance of John.
2. What five good teachings did John bring over from the old prophetic religion?
3. How was John impressed by the surroundings of his boyhood?
4. On what Old Testament passages was the messianic hope based?
5. Name four elements of that hope.
6. Give three different views of the way in which the Messianic Age would be introduced.
7. Show that John was a true forerunner of Jesus.
8. John's two chief contributions to religion.
9. What was the tragic finish of John's career?
10. What is humility? Luke 3:4-6.

Oral Discussion

1. Show that John applied social tests to religion.
2. What in John's preaching reminded the people of Elijah?

3. What shows that books written in the time of John the Baptist advocated the messianic hope?
4. What was Jesus' solution of the problem concerning the kind of a Messiah he should be?

Special Assignments

1. Read the *Benedictus* (Luke 1: 68-79) and make a list of the ideas contained in it.
2. In what respects is Del Sarto's painting of the boy, *John the Baptist*, too idealistic? See Bailey, *Art Studies in the Life of Christ*, 67.
3. Reasons for thinking that John did not have any connection with the sect called Essenes. See Edersheim, vol. I, 325, 326.
4. Select passages from the Gospels to show that the people of Judea were expecting the Messiah.

CHAPTER IV

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

Mark 1:9-11; Matthew 3:13-17; Luke 3:21, 22.

1. A Sensation in Nazareth.

When the news of John's revival in Judea reached Nazareth it created a mild sensation. The two chief religious factions were affected in different ways. On the one hand there were the Zealots who were eager for a leader to appear who would stir up a rebellion against the Roman government. When they heard of the great crowd that thronged about John the Baptist they had hopes that he might be such a leader, but his stern preaching of moral reform quenched their hopes.

On the other hand there were the "meek of the land" who were opposed to violence, although they also suffered at the hands of the Roman government. John's preaching meant to them the possibility of a general reform among the Jews which would prepare the way for the establishment on earth of the Kingdom of Heaven. They believed that God would not fulfil his great promises of that good day coming until all the people had repented of their sins.

2. A Challenge to Jesus.

We know from what Jesus said later that he belonged to the group called the "meek of the land." We cannot help believing that many others in Nazareth like Jesus'

mother, shared with Jesus his opposition to violence and war in dealing with the government to which they paid tribute. For more than a dozen years Jesus had been an active citizen of his little city, and doubtless had been very prominent in the synagogue. He must have been the centre of a large group of people who were intelligent because they had studied the prophets, and who with genuine piety awaited the fulfilment of God's promises to Israel. To this group and especially to Jesus the message of John came as a great challenge.

They perceived that John's demand for social justice and for repentance was in line with the teachings of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah. To Jesus the appeal of John may have been personal, for in his heart he may have held secretly the hope that he might do something toward the fulfilment of those glorious ideals which the prophets had held forth. When it was reported to Jesus that John's great theme was "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" he knew that the time had come for him to make the great decision.

His whole life had been a preparation for his mission. The stories of his birth (Luke, chapter 2) may show that his mother knew from the beginning that the babe was to become a great religious leader. While the birth of a child in any good home is an occasion for rejoicing and for years afterward awakens tender memories, yet no other little boy had such beautiful pictures painted or songs sung in his honor. Correggio's *Holy Night* and Phillips Brooks' *O Little Town of Bethlehem* represent truly the deeper meanings of his coming.

"Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee to-night."

The account of his visit to the temple at the age of twelve is the only word that breaks the silence of the next thirty years in Nazareth. That reveals a thoughtful, enthusiastic young Jew to whom the temple at Jerusalem was the true house of God. His reading and his lessons in the synagogue had raised many questions in his mind. Hofmann's *Christ and the Doctors* is not untrue to the main facts in the case. One who, like Jesus, was to revolutionize the world of thought must have had, even at an early age, ideas that would startle the staid old doctors in the porches of the temple. Their faces, as Hofmann's picture shows, furnish evidence enough that they had never dealt with a boy like this.

“Is not this the carpenter?” the question asked by Jesus’ neighbors after his address in the synagogue at Nazareth (Mark 6:3), makes it clear that Jesus had lived among them as a humble workman without making any claim of superiority. Tissot’s picture of the youth Jesus doing errands for Joseph, carrying a heavy board through a street in Nazareth, suggests the whole story of his simple life among the common people. By his intimate association through many years with these lowly folk he early learned to believe in the worth of every human soul. “He saw in the publican whom all men shunned the germ of an honest life. He saw in the fallen woman, whom the proud Pharisee thought had defiled his house, a spark of the divine love. He believed in it, and it was quickened into a holy flame. In the most ignorant and lost he saw the children of his Father, the citizens of heaven. As the artist’s shaping imagination beholds within the unhewn block of moss-stained marble the form and loveliness of the statue he has already created, and will now embody,

so Christ saw in the most degraded soul a 'temple of the Holy Ghost' with capacities for infinite progress, with powers for noble work, with possibilities for perfect holiness" (Brooke, *Sermons*).

The country about Nazareth was in its educational influence historically for a Jewish boy much what the country about Boston is for an American boy. If the village teacher was a man of any imagination he must have spent afternoons of rare interest with his schoolboys on the Nazareth hilltops. "You cannot see from Nazareth the surrounding country, for Nazareth rests in a basin among hills; but the moment you climb to the edge of this basin, which is everywhere within the limit of the village boys' playground, what a view you have! Esdraelon lies before you with its twenty battle-fields—the scenes of Barak's and Gideon's victories, the scenes of Saul's and of Josiah's defeats, the scenes of the struggles for freedom in the glorious days of the Maccabees. There is Naboth's vineyard and the place of Jehu's revenge upon Jezebel; there Shunem and the house of Elisha; there Carmel and the place of Elijah's sacrifice. To the east the Valley of Jordan with the long range of Gilead; to the west the radiance of the Great Sea, with the ships of Tarshish and the promise of the Isles. You see thirty miles in three directions. It is a map of Old Testament history. But equally full and rich was the present life on which the eyes of the boy Jesus looked out. . . . For all the rumor of the empire entered Palestine close to Nazareth—the news from Rome about the emperor's health, about the changing influence of the great statesmen, about the prospects at court of Herod, or of the Jews; about Cæsar's last order concerning the tribute, or whether the policy of the procurator would be sustained. . . .

A vision of all the kingdoms of the world was as possible from this village as from the mount of temptation" (George Adam Smith, *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, pp. 433, 435.)

3. Jesus Leaves Home.

As the oldest son of a widowed mother Jesus had borne the burden of supporting the large family. But the time had now come when he could leave home because his brothers and sisters were old enough to care for themselves. The "Gospel to the Hebrews" states that his mother and brothers urged him to go and see John the Baptist. Whether that is true or not we may readily believe that his mother understood something of his ambition to become a religious leader.

We may imagine that Mary waked very early on that morning when Jesus was to start for Judea. She would go up that stairway outside the house which led to the roof and wake Jesus and help him prepare for the journey. It may be that his brothers were opposed to his going away, for later we read that they did not accept him as the Messiah. But with his mother's approval he broke the ties which, through his youth and young manhood, had bound him to his native city, and thus started on his new career of sacrifice and suffering which ended on the cross.

4. Jesus Meets John.

John's rally call, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," which many travellers had reported to Jesus, made a strong appeal to him because of his experiences in Nazareth. As a boy in the synagogue he had accepted his parents' faith without question, but as the years went by he felt some objection to the useless forms in

their worship. He realized that he had a special mission and this report of John's preaching of a new message aroused him to action. With keen anticipations he walked down the valley road through Bethshan across the Jordan and along the east bank of the river toward Jericho. Had Jesus seen John before this time? At any rate he had not been with him much for many years and he was anxious to talk with him. He wondered whether John favored the Zealots or the spiritual view of the coming kingdom, which Jesus himself had come to believe.

He found John baptizing converts on the east bank of the Jordan not far from Jericho. The new preacher had gained the name Baptist because he spent a large part of his time in baptizing his converts and explaining the significance of the ceremony. Josephus, in agreement with the Gospels, bears clear testimony to the fact that there was a new element in John's baptism. While it was "a purification of the body," yet that could not be received until after "the soul was already purified by righteousness." Before that time ceremonial washings had been common among the Jews but they had no connection with repentance or personal morality.

This new element appealed to Jesus, and we may imagine that he spent the night with John and talked over this new idea of the Kingdom and found that John rang true to the prophets, law, and psalms which Jesus knew so well. And one would like to have been there to hear that conversation. In such a spirit John and Charles Wesley and their little group of Oxford friends prayed together, and in our own country, at Williams College, Judson and Mills at the haystack meeting lighted fires of spiritual fervor that swept over the world.

5. The Scene of the Baptism.

Frank Du Mond's *The Baptism of Christ* brings many elements of the scene beautifully before us. The Jordan with its white lilies at Jesus' feet, the attitude of listening to God's voice, the little groups of oriental people on the shore, John's emotion expressed in his poise and attitude, all help to visualize this beautiful scene, although the face of the Christ, as always, falls far below the ideal.

When Jesus came up out of the water, he had a new sense of the overshadowing presence of God. Mark describes this as "the Spirit like a dove descending upon him." For many centuries the word "dove" among the Jews stood for gentleness and brooding love. Milton, in the opening lines of *Paradise Lost*, uses it in this sense of brooding love. Then Jesus heard the voice saying, "Thou art my beloved Son." This meant to him that he was to go on his mission with the aid of the Father. Luke adds that the vision came to him while in prayer. This was the most decisive event in the life of Jesus.

6. Why Jesus Observed This Form.

The Gospel of Matthew reports that John objected to baptizing Jesus, saying that he had more need of being baptized of him. Jesus answered: "Let it to be so now, for it is right that we observe all necessary forms in our religious life." He acknowledged the value of the old religion by letting the last of its prophets baptize him; by the same act he started a new religion, recognizing himself as the central point of history. By observing this ceremony he declared that he was to live on the human plane, tempted in all points like others, a sharer in all earth's sorrows and joys, its infirmities and its duties.

This does not imply that he was sinful, but that he subjected himself to the laws of human nature. He was entering on a new sphere of action; and at that time baptism was regarded as the best method of initiation. Submission to such a form no more implies as some one has said "a consciousness of sin in Christ, than the taking of the oath of allegiance on entering upon an official post implies in an Englishman's heart disloyalty to his sovereign."

Even if the forms are hard for us they have as important a function in our lives as the bitter rind has for the orange. We could not have the delicious juice if there were no rind. So the custom of touching one's cap or lifting the hat to a lady helps preserve courtesy and actually develops the element of courtesy in the mind. A great student of psychology once said, "There is no impression without expression." Unless we put into words our thought we do not really grasp what we are vaguely thinking of. When a boy in school says, "I know but I cannot say it," he really does not know. If one thinks that he is religious at heart but does not reveal his religious interest by any outward expression he is probably deceiving himself. So Jesus gave an example of permanent value when he offered himself for baptism.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Two interpretations of John's message by different persons in Nazareth.
2. Who were the "meek of the land"?
3. What desire in Jesus' heart was strengthened by the appeal of John?
4. What preparation for his mission had the silent years in Nazareth imparted to Jesus?
5. What responsibility may he, as the oldest son of Mary, have felt toward his home and mother?

6. What would such congenial spirits as Jesus and John talk about when they met at the Jordan?
7. What new element in John's explanation of baptism especially appealed to Jesus?
8. Describe the baptism of Jesus.
9. Why did Jesus submit to baptism?
10. What has the observance of forms to do with the substance of religion?

Oral Discussion

1. How many brothers and sisters did Jesus have? Matthew 13: 55, 56.
2. Had Jesus ever seen John the Baptist before the time of his baptism?
3. Point out on the map the road from Nazareth to the scene of the baptism.
4. Was Jesus' baptism a confession of sin on his part?
5. Give some examples of the value of conforming to the ceremonies of the church.

Special Assignments

1. What do we know of Jesus' life before he responded to the call of John? Study Correggio's *Holy Night*, Hofmann's *Christ and the Doctors*, and Tissot's *Youth of Jesus* and write a brief statement of their suggestions concerning the youth of Jesus.
2. The significance of the "Dove" in the baptismal scene. Barton's *Jesus of Nazareth*, 113, 114.
3. Representations of Christ's baptism in the Catacombs at Rome.

CHAPTER V

THE TEMPTATION

Mark 1:12, 13; Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13.

1. Temptation Follows Exaltation of Spirit.

There is a certain rhythm in our lives as in music, according to which moments of great joy are followed by periods of depression. Jesus' baptism was the high mark in his experience thus far. He felt sure of his great mission and of his acceptance with the Father in heaven. Had not the Father said: "Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased?" Ecstatic joy, the highest consciousness of inspiration, carried him to the mountain-tops of vision. Everything seemed possible. He might be able quickly to win all mankind to his Father's allegiance. Thus many great prophets and social reformers have felt, but their enthusiasm was too great for wise action, and their joy too fine to battle with the coarse world. Mohammed's lofty visions on Mount Hira were followed by temptations of the devil in the cave.

Jesus shared this human experience. From the mountain-top of our vision we go into the valley of temptation. It is a period of silence, loneliness, and suffering. The obstacles in the way of realizing our hopes loom gigantic before us. It may be, as Tennyson says, that Providence takes this way of removing the thoughts of selfish gain from our sense of mission.

"Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, pass'd in music out of sight."

2. The Place of the Temptation.

From the ford of the Jordan, six miles east of Jericho, where the baptism took place, Jesus walked alone into the rough barren region to a hill now called Quarantana (meaning forty days), the last peak of a western ridge, ending in a sheer precipice. "No sign of life was visible except the birds of the desert, and now and then one of its sly, wild animals. A few stray thrushes uttered melancholy notes. A black grackle with yellow wings flew over the traveller's head and rose, vanishing. Vultures circled low in grim spots about the landscape. An unseen fox, or desert partridge, waiting for the dark, slipped stealthily among the rocks" (Phelps, *Story of Jesus Christ*).

The tourist standing on the same spot to-day may see what Jesus saw. In front was a stretch of low marsh-land with the Jordan in the distance winding through it. A little to the south was the Dead Sea, and beyond it rose the purple hills of Moab with lonely Mount Nebo in plain view, that sacred spot where Moses died after his solitary vigil. As night came on Jesus descended the side of the hill in the midst of the caves and gorges and sat at the entrance of one of the caves. He had eaten nothing that day but he felt no hunger, for a great depression was upon him. Doubt crept into his mind. Had he really been called? How could he accomplish the great task? Days and nights went by as he pondered over the issues involved.

Cornicelius, in his picture, *Christ Tempted by Satan*, is probably correct in making the temptation a mental experience. It is hardly conceivable that Jesus would be influenced in the least by the horrible presence of a Satan in person. The struggle was in his mind, as it was in the case of Mohammed and as it is in our own

temptations. In one thing the artist was in error, for the crown in the picture is out of character. Jesus had decided long before the baptism that the messianic idea which called for a king was untrue.

3. The Story of the Three Temptations.

The first temptation consisted in the suggestion that as a Son of God he should not be obliged to suffer hunger. Why should he not by miracle change one of those round stones which reminded him of a loaf of bread and thus be able to have food there in that desert place? Quickly there came to his mind these words (that God spoke to Moses concerning his trial for forty years in the wilderness), God "suffered thee to hunger . . . and fed thee with manna that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread alone but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live" (Deuteronomy 8:3). These meant to Jesus that he should not depend on God for special favors. In the new religion Jews were not to have advantage over Gentiles. To be a son of Abraham would not enable a man to have favors over others. A Christian must accept whatever God gives him, as Moses accepted the mysterious manna in the wilderness.

Moreover, Christianity, as Jesus had thought it out during these forty days, was to be different from the Old Testament religion. It was to be inner and not external, a thing of the soul and not of outward prosperity or adversity. The new religion was to stand in sharp contrast with the Jewish faith in the matter of miracles. The Old Testament was a history of miraculous interventions in behalf of Israel. Not so, the history of Christianity: "It sees the love of God in

ordinary, every-day things, such as birds, flowers, grass, common people, children, ordinary fathers, ordinary neighbors." Jesus' religion stood opposed to that of John the Baptist at three points: exclusiveness, externality, and miraculous intervention.

The second temptation as reported in Matthew is a more striking example of intervention by miracle. As the days in the wilderness went by Jesus felt that he was struggling against an evil suggestion which was prompting him. The 91st Psalm describes angels holding up a falling man:

For he will give his angels charge over thee,
To keep thee in all thy ways;
They shall bear thee up in their hands,
Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

The suggestion was that as God's chosen leader he might gain a large following by leaping from the temple roof. At certain times of the year thousands of people would be standing on the pavements below waiting for the temple trumpet to sound the signal for prayer. If at such a time he should unexpectedly appear on some lofty part of the temple and leap off and be held in the air by angels he would be meeting a popular expectation aroused by a saying in the prophecy of Malachi, "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple" (Malachi 3:1). But to Jesus' mind came another saying of Deuteronomy, "Thou shalt not put to the proof Jehovah thy God" (6:16), thus doubting his presence unless proved by some miracle. So this is similar to the first temptation except that it was to be a public, spectacular miracle.

The third temptation came upon Jesus in connection with the belief in the Kingdom of God which he had

inherited from his fathers. Rome now ruled the world, but shortly, by divine aid, might not the Jews be given the supreme power? If Jesus would only compromise with his conscience and be willing to resort to violence, just once, God would make his people rulers of the world and the Kingdom of Heaven would at once be established. "In some moment of ecstatic vision all the golden glory of royalty throughout the world passed before him. His profound desire was to secure all this for Jehovah, to let the everlasting glory of God's radiant heavens into the royal courts and to transform their millions of subjects into obedient sons of the Living God" (Bosworth, *The Life and Teaching of Jesus*, p. 78). Again the words of God to Moses flashed into the mind of Jesus, "Thou shalt fear Jehovah thy God; and him shalt thou serve" (Deuteronomy 6:13). Obey the God of right and shun every resort to wrong. So the three temptations centre around the same subject, the character of the religion which Jesus is to establish. Long afterward in reporting this experience to his disciples Jesus explained, in the terms of turning a stone to bread, leaping from a pinnacle, and the vision of the world from a mountain, that he was utterly opposed to basing his religion on favoritism for any people, or on external display.

4. How Jesus Differed from John.

Jesus did not fall in line with John's idea about the Messiah. Both believed in the necessity for moral improvement, but John saw it as a preparation for the coming of the Messiah and a great catastrophe which should destroy Israel's national enemies. He evidently shared the common view of the method of inaugurating the Kingdom of God. "Even now is the axe laid unto

the root of the trees . . . the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire."

Jesus originated a different kind of religion. In the Sermon on the Mount and in his parables he gave a new vision of the possibilities of human life. The natural hatred of enemies and the miraculous exaltation of Israel to the lordship of the world disappears and universal love takes its place. "Until now the Kingdom of God suffereth violence, and men of violence take it by force," Jesus said, referring, perhaps, to the Zealots, who proposed to start a war against the Romans in order to establish the Kingdom. But Jesus was a teacher of love and showed by humanity, purity, non-resistance, peace-making, that God's kingdom would gradually fill the earth. Christianity was to be different from Judaism. Jesus was no mere follower of John; he was the founder of a new system. That he realized this is shown clearly by his parables of the old and new garments and the new wine in the old wine-skins (Mark 2:21, 22). Again, John was a severe spirit, a hermit, out of sympathy with social life; Jesus was kindly and sympathetic. He liked to be with people. He wore no weird dress and did not stay in the wilderness, but mingled freely with the common people in their homes and synagogues. The temptation story shows that he thought of religion as an inner experience, a development of a better social order not by miraculous overthrow of society but by the creation of a new spirit in individuals.

5. The Temptation Represents a Universal Law.

Any one who undertakes a mission of kindness in the world sooner or later must spend a period in the "wilderness." The power of evil among men, the sense

of our own weakness, the conviction that it is our duty to do something, drives us apart from our associates. Happy the man who then realizes that he shares the burden with God and refuses to turn stones into bread for his own comfort and to compromise with evil for worldly success!

The Russian author Tolstoi's application of the temptations of Jesus to himself has a parallel in our own lives. The first was an assertion of the rights of the body. He found danger to happiness in that. Pleasure is not happiness. The second was a temptation to throw the body away, to commit suicide. The third was to win for self the material things, for a man has to adapt himself to things as they are. "No," Tolstoi said, "the spirit must come first." So he voluntarily lived the life of a poor man.

The temptation affords a great contrast between Jesus, who chose the mountain trail of hardship and self-denial, and men like Pilate, who chose the broad way of physical ease and self-indulgence. The Russian painter Gay has a picture of Jesus and Pilate. Tolstoi was deeply moved by it. He described it in substance as follows: that fat, shaven neck of the Roman governor, that large, well-fed sensual body, that outstretched arm and its gesture of contempt; it seems alive, it breathes, and impresses itself on the memory forever. Facing Pilate is the witness to the truth, thin, muscular, worn by long vigils yet master of himself and of the multitudes. Pilate despised him, but Jesus chose the way that overcame the Roman Empire and won the world.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. How does the temptation illustrate the law of rhythm?
2. What could Jesus see from Mount Quarantana? Point out the place on the map.
3. Tell in brief form, as given in Matthew, the story of the three temptations.
4. What three radical differences between Jesus' religion and that of the Old Testament are involved in his decision in the first temptation?
5. In our experience what corresponds to the appeal to the spectacular in the second temptation?
6. On what belief of the Jewish people was the third temptation based?
7. Show that the three temptations centre around one subject. What was the subject?
8. Two points of difference between Jesus and John?
9. Name one important lesson from the temptation of Jesus.

Oral Discussion

1. Repeat Tennyson's lines beginning, "Love took up the harp of life."
2. In what form did Satan appear to Jesus?
3. Which is more important, to see God in every-day things or in the odd and unusual occurrences of life?
4. Quote the four lines of Psalm 91 which may have suggested to Jesus the second temptation.
5. What happiness may have come to Jesus during the period of temptation?
6. Give some instances of miraculous intervention to help Old Testament characters.
7. Show from this lesson that it is helpful to know the words of the Bible.

Special Assignments

1. What interpretation of the temptation does Cornicelius give in his painting, *Christ Tempted by Satan*?
2. Write a description of the region back of Jericho, the probable scene of the temptation. See Phelps, *Story of Jesus Christ*, 77-80.
3. Report the account of the temptation of Mohammed.
4. Show that the Jews regarded themselves as the favorites of God.

Part 3

POPULAR PREACHER AND HEALER

CHAPTER VI

JESUS WINS THE MASSES IN GALILEE

Mark 1:16-45.

i. The Order of Events.

How long Jesus remained in Judea after the baptism and temptation we have no means of knowing. Indeed, no one can say with certainty how long the public ministry of Jesus lasted or in what order the events of his public life occurred. Two points only are defined, his baptism, in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar, in the fall of 28 A. D., and his crucifixion, in the spring of 30 A. D., under Pontius Pilate. These events may be placed a year or two earlier if one dates the beginning of the reign of Tiberius from the time when he was made co-ruler with Augustus.

We follow the order of events as given in Mark rather than the Fourth Gospel. No reference to any preaching in Judea occurs in the first three Gospels. It is therefore likely that Jesus remained in Bethany and Jerusalem planning his work, making friends, and observing the customs of religion at the capital of the nation. Jesus may have refrained out of courtesy to John from beginning his ministry in Galilee while John was still active along the banks of the Jordan. Mark says Jesus

began preaching in Galilee after John had been imprisoned.

2. Jesus Chooses a Strategic Centre.

He went into Galilee preaching the good news of God. In the time of Jesus, Palestine was divided into four parts, three of which were on the west of the Jordan and one was on the east. Farthest south was rugged and barren Judea, with the proud capital at Jerusalem. North of that lay the rolling and fertile hills of Samaria, with two large cities, Samaria and Shechem. The Samaritans were hated by the Jews, because they were not of pure Jewish blood. Judea and Samaria, by request of the Jews themselves, were attached to Syria in 6 A. D. and were ruled by Roman procurators instead of by Herod the Great and his sons. Pilate was procurator in the time of Jesus. North of Samaria was Galilee, with its rich plain of Esdraelon and its lovely lake. Lonely Perea was situated between the Jordan and the desert. It did not quite reach the Sea of Galilee on the north and did not pass beyond the river Arnon on the south.

A preliminary study of the map of Palestine is most important. The boundaries are easy to remember if one does not try to be exact. Indeed there is no definite, unchangeable boundary line either for the north or the south of Palestine. In general, a line drawn from Tyre to the southern base of Mount Hermon would enclose the Holy Land on the north, and another from the south shore of the Dead Sea toward the west through Beersheba would form the southern boundary. On the west is the Mediterranean Sea and on the east the Arabian Desert.

The form of the land has influenced its history. In

prehistoric times an earthquake split the land in two, making what is now the Jordan valley. This gulf formed a barrier that protected the Chosen People against the wandering tribes of the desert, and enabled them to develop during the thousand years before Christ a civilization which gave to the world its supreme religion.

When Jesus went to Galilee to teach this new religion he founded his message on this text: "The kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe in the gospel." Crowds gathered around him as they had often gathered around other teachers, for it was not an uncommon thing to see rabbis teaching little groups of people here and there. Galilee was the most favorable place for such public teaching, for the Galileans were more open-minded than the Judeans, partly because they had more frequent contact with the larger world.

The population was very dense and it was possible in a short time to address thousands of people. Josephus wrote that there were two hundred and four towns and cities in a district that contained only sixteen hundred square miles. The most thickly populated part was the little plain of Gennesaret, three miles long and one mile wide, on the north of the Sea of Galilee.

The sea is a beautiful inland lake surrounded by high hills, and lies almost seven hundred feet below the level of the ocean. It is thirteen miles long and eight miles wide and shaped like a harp. Around its lovely blue waters clustered nine prosperous cities, forming an almost unbroken ring of buildings. To-day the visitor may see the ruins of one of these cities, Tiberias, and bathe in the warm mineral waters from the same spring which filled the baths of Herod Antipas. It was an admirable centre for outdoor preaching, for crowds of fishermen were found along the shores of

the sea and close by was a much-travelled highway running through Capernaum.

3. Location of Capernaum.

Matthew 9:1 calls Capernaum Jesus' "own city." Because his first four disciples lived there and because it was so central Jesus made that the starting-point of all his travels. From it he went forth into the towns of Galilee and from it at the last he went to Jerusalem to die. Nazareth did not have this honor because it was not so well located and also because it failed to recognize the greatness of Jesus. "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country."

Capernaum is situated on the north of the Sea of Galilee near the Plain of Gennesaret. This plain consists of green open slopes surrounded on the north, west, and south by barren, imprisoning cliffs. The road to Capernaum winds down among these precipitous hills to the ancient site known as Tell Hum. Here to-day not far from the shore one may see the ruins of the synagogue in which Jesus spoke "with authority" and near by the mosaic floor of a church which was built over the house of Peter, where Jesus took dinner on his first Sabbath in the city. The synagogue was built by a Roman centurion (Luke 7:5). The ruins show that it was a beautiful structure, seventy-nine by fifty-nine feet, built of fine white limestone. The central part of the interior was surrounded by colonnades on the north, west, and south.

Standing on the stone steps at the entrance one had in view toward the east Bethsaida and the part of the plain where the Feeding of the Five Thousand took place, toward the south the sea and the new Greek cities on the heights with their white public buildings

gleaming in the sun. There also was the yellow cliff over which the herd of swine ran down into the sea.

There was beauty there in Jesus' day, not only the sparkling blue water as now, but also large groves, noble gardens, and fleets of sails. There was food and drink for all, for the lake was full of fish and the water wholesome. It was the sea that redeemed that hot basin and made it habitable, and it was the sea near which was concentrated the abundance of water, the fertility, and the industry and trade of that whole province.

Of all the cities on the Sea of Galilee Capernaum was best suited to the purposes of the Master. It was on the great highway from Damascus to Jerusalem and connected directly with the other great roads of the ancient world. It had its share of Greek and Roman influences to make it broad, but was far enough from Herod's city, Tiberias, to be free from official domination. Here in a valley nearly seven hundred feet below sea level, around the blue Sea of Galilee, Jesus spent almost all the days of his public career. Here started the religion which went forth and won the world.

4. A Typical Day.

In three paragraphs which are gems of beauty and brevity Mark describes Jesus' first Sabbath in Capernaum. In the morning he was in the synagogue, accompanied no doubt by his four disciples. A larger attendance than usual was present, because it was expected that the new teacher would speak. There was evidently general approval, for, they said, he teaches with "authority," not by repeating dry-as-dust quotations but from his heart with conviction and power. In the excitement a "man with an unclean spirit" cried out and called Jesus the Holy One of God, meaning

probably the Messiah. Jesus by a word exorcised the evil spirit, and at once became famous.

In the afternoon he was at the house of Peter and was asked to help his host's mother-in-law, who was ill with fever. He cured her, and she was able to help serve the guests. When evening came the fame of the Master brought to the house many that were ill and some that had evil spirits. He cured those who had diseases and cast out many demons. The record says that the evil spirits recognized that he was the Messiah, but that he did not permit them to speak. This evidently means that it was the belief in those days that both the evil spirits and the Messiah were supernatural beings and therefore had the power of recognizing each other.

5. The Experience of Jesus in Healing.

When the crowds came early next morning to Peter's house to see the one who did the miracles on the Sabbath, Jesus could not be found. Mark says that he had arisen very early and gone out to a lonely place to pray. Does this indicate that he was greatly troubled by the interest of the masses in physical healing? Did he pass a sleepless night after his first miracles because he feared that the greater work of teaching would suffer? Luke in reporting the same scene seems to suggest this. He says (4:42, 43) that when the crowd tried to prevent Jesus from going away he persisted saying: "I must preach the Gospel, for therefore was I sent." The people wanted more miracles but he declared that his mission was to teach. This is in keeping with the text he first used in Galilee: "Repent ye, and believe in the Gospel."

There can be no doubt, however, that Jesus did won-

derful things for the sick and insane. The sad condition of these unfortunates appealed to his sympathy. He had the power to help them and he used that power.

6. Jesus Returns to His Home Town.

Jesus told his Good News of the love of God in many places in Galilee (Mark 1:39). The freshness and originality of his ideas about the Father in heaven and his sympathy for the poor and sick won for him great popularity everywhere. When he reached his native place, the city where he had worked for many years as a carpenter, his fame had preceded him and his fellow citizens expected him to do wonders in Nazareth as he had in Capernaum. The story of this visit to Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30) is one of the most interesting in the New Testament. We may imagine, as Elizabeth Stuart Phelps does in her *Story of Jesus Christ*, that Jesus and his disciples arrived before sunset, for the Hebrew Sabbath lasted from sunset Friday until sunset Saturday. "The little town, occupied along the length of its rough highway, turned indifferent eyes to the mountains which were blazing in the dying day, and paid scant attention to the young citizen who had left a while ago, unknown, and was returning famous. Jesus looked at the familiar hills—grand, silent, these in solemn shadow, those transfigured with color, all carrying the thoughts up; but the villagers scarcely looked at Jesus. Their eyes were on the level earth, his on the heights. What wonder that they could not meet?"

The next morning Jesus and his disciples attended the service in the synagogue. It may help us to realize just what happened there if we put in dramatic form the astonishing experience of that Sabbath morning.

Scene 1

Jesus Returns to Nazareth

Place: Street leading to the synagogue.

Characters: Jesus, the disciples, and some bystanders.

Jesus speaks: Remain here; I will go alone to the synagogue where I worshipped as a youth. There, perhaps, I shall speak to my kinsmen and townspeople.

Disciple: Very well, Master, but remember the old proverb, no prophet is recognized in his own country.

(Jesus goes into the synagogue.)

Second disciple (to curious bystanders): You see our Master; he is the famous Rabbi who is doing such great things in Capernaum.

Scene 2

In the Synagogue

Characters: The congregation, and Jesus who is sitting quietly in the rear.

Reader (opening the service): Bless ye the Eternal, who is worthy of blessings for evermore.

Congregation and Reader: Blessed art thou, the Eternal, Our God, King of the Universe, who hath formed the light, and created the darkness.

Blessed art thou, King of the universe, who has selected us from all peoples, and given us thy law.

Reader (beginning the second part of the service): Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one (and the rest of Deuteronomy 6:4-9). (This is followed by the reading of Deuteronomy 11:13-21 and Numbers 15:37-41.)

One of the leaders (beginning the third part of the service and leading in a prayer for redemption—followed by five or six other petitions): True and valid, firmly fixed and all-enduring, right and trustworthy,

lovely and endeared, desirable and pleasant, sublime and all-powerful, regular and acceptable, and good and beautiful is this word unto us for ever and ever. True is the God of the universe, our King, the rock of Jacob, the shield of our salvation. We will render thanks unto thee, and declare thy praise, because of our lives that are entrusted to thy hand, and our souls that are confided unto thee. For all these things be thy name blessed and extolled, O our King, continually unto all eternity.

A leader (priestly blessings): Our God and the God of our fathers, bless us with the threefold blessing contained in the law:

The Eternal bless and preserve thee !

The Eternal cause his countenance to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee !

The Eternal direct his countenance toward thee and grant thee peace !

Congregation: Let the son of David, thy servant, come speedily, and do thou enhance his power with thy salvation that we daily hope for. Blessed art thou, O Eternal, who causest the horn of salvation to sprout forth.

(A light comes over the face of Jesus as he hears these earnest words of his people.)

Scene 3

Jesus Rebukes His Kinsmen

Reader: (begins the fifth part of the service by reading from the law.)

The reading of the law is finished.

(An attendant approaches Jesus and asks him to read from the Prophets.)

Jesus (beginning the sixth part of the service, reads

from the prophet Isaiah): The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; he hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. (The Jews about him stare at this unusual reading and the unusual manner of the reading.)

A Jew: Hsst! Who is he? Do we not know him?

Second Jew: They said outside that he is the famous rabbi who has created such a stir in Capernaum.

Jesus (translating into Aramaic, winds the scroll and begins to explain the reading): To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears.

(The Jews about him strain their eyes to watch him and listen attentively, with some signs of hostility.)

First Jew: Is not this Joseph's son, Joseph the carpenter?

Jesus: Doubtless ye will say unto me this parable, Physician, heal thyself; whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thine own country.

(Outburst of dissatisfaction from the Jews. Jesus tries to continue, but it is of no use.)

Jesus: Verily I say unto you, no prophet is acceptable in his own country. You claim to be the chosen people of God, the elect. I tell you, there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the Prophet, and none of them were cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian. (The service breaks up in confusion, the people crowd around Jesus and force him out of the synagogue.)

The crowd with the quick passion of an oriental mob pushes Jesus along toward the outskirts of the town where there is a precipice. To his horror he perceives that they are actually going to force him over the

edge. At this the Master turns and faces his hostile neighbors. When they see his face and feel the power of his personality expressed in his eyes, they fall back and he passes unharmed through their midst.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Give the probable dates of Jesus' birth, baptism, and crucifixion.
2. Describe Palestine and locate on the map the four divisions.
3. A difference between the Galileans and Judeans that was favorable to the success of the new religion?
4. What are some of the reasons why Jesus made Capernaum his headquarters?
5. What happened on Jesus' first Sabbath in Capernaum that made it a typical day in his first months of popularity in Galilee?
6. Show that Jesus regarded it as his chief mission to teach rather than heal the sick.
7. What explains Jesus' popularity with the common people?
8. What unhappy experience did Jesus have in Nazareth during his first period of preaching in Galilee?

Oral Discussion

1. Let the class read the drama in the synagogue at Nazareth, members of the class taking the different parts.
2. Why were Jesus' fellow citizens jealous of him?
3. Why do we follow the order of events as given in the Gospel of Mark rather than in the Gospel of John?
4. Describe the Sea of Galilee.
5. What was the location of Capernaum?
6. What danger was there in Jesus' healing the sick?
7. What shows that Jesus had a more powerful personality than other men?

Special Assignments

1. Study the order of events in Jesus' life and give the reasons for settling upon the following dates in his career; his birth, 5 or 6 B. C.; his baptism, 28 A. D.; and his crucifixion, 30 A. D.
2. Describe Tissot's painting, *Jesus in the Synagogue*.

CHAPTER VII

JESUS CHALLENGES THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Mark 2:1-3:6; II Corinthians 3:6-17; Romans 8:3

I. First Criticism by the Scribes.

The people had heard Jesus gladly, because he talked of things that interested them. Wherever he appeared, a throng quickly gathered, partly to hear him speak and partly to see him heal the sick. He taught them about three subjects: the Kingdom of God, the fatherhood of God, and a new standard of morals. He differed from all their other teachers, because he seemed most interested in showing them how to be happy. His new morality was not less strict than that of the Old Testament, but his way of stressing the good results won the people. In one place only, Nazareth, had he been opposed. That was due, probably, more to jealousy than to any objection to his teaching.

When he came back to Capernaum, he evidently made Peter's house his week-day teaching quarters. People would crowd in through the open door when they saw that Jesus was teaching. One day four friends were bringing a palsied man on a stretcher, but found that the crowd reached out into the street, so that their entrance was blocked. They carried the sick man by the outdoor stairway to the roof and made an opening in the thatch and let him down in front of Jesus. Jesus saw the faith of these four men and said to the paralytic, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." The teachers of the Pharisees, who were seated close by, took this

occasion to oppose Jesus. They said, "Who can forgive sins except God?" Whether they were sincere, or simply used this occasion to catch Jesus, we do not know. John 20:23 shows that the apostles were given authority to forgive sin. That probably meant the authority to pronounce that one's sins were forgiven, if the sinner was truly repentant.

At any rate, this was the beginning of a long struggle between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. They here charged him with blasphemy. He replied by declaring that he could not only forgive sins, but also heal the body, and then told the man to take up his bed and walk. William Blake calls these critics unsympathetic, reading blasphemy into this desire of Jesus to free the sick man from his troubles. He calls them the "wheel of religion," a wheel on which Jesus would be broken.

"But Jesus is the bright Preacher of Life,
Creating Nature from this fiery Law,
By self-denial and Forgiveness of Sin."

2. Jesus Invites Further Criticism by the Friends He Chooses.

In his journeys around Capernaum, Jesus often passed the toll station on the Damascus Road where Levi collected the tax on fish and other articles of food. He became well acquainted with Levi, who in Matthew 9:9 is called Matthew, and found him to be a very able and trustworthy man. So he called him to be one of his disciples. Levi gave a banquet to Jesus in honor of this event and invited many of his friends. Jesus, disregarding the law of the Jews which forbade them to eat with those who were ceremonially unclean, ate freely with those whom the Pharisees regarded as outcasts. He was impatient with class distinctions. To

him a tax-collector or a common woman like Mary Magdalene, provided they were sorry for their sins and sincerely desiring a noble life, were better than the proud Pharisees. He did not despise Levi for taking the contract to collect the Roman taxes. The only reason for condemning him would be that he belonged to that group of tax-collectors that overcharged the people. But there is no reason to think that Levi was a man of that sort.

Jesus was criticised for associating with "sinners." By sinners the critics referred to a large group of irreligious persons who did not attend the synagogue and made no effort to keep the law of Moses. They were classed with publicans for they dealt freely with the many foreigners that had come in increasing numbers into Palestine since the time of Alexander the Great. Their business required them to deal so intimately with outsiders that they were regarded as "defiled." They might be just as good morally as a Pharisee but they could not keep all the six hundred ceremonial laws which a thoroughly good Jew was supposed to observe. Jesus declared himself the friend of these sinners. He knew that many of these ceremonial laws were an unnecessary burden and that they did not promote spiritual religion.

In his fight against the scribes he was fighting the cause of humanity. He saw the worth of the human soul, and he was the first teacher in human history who made the world see the value of every soul. He perceived beneath the rough exterior of the commonplace man qualities of love, loyalty, and heroism. He treated little children even with reverence, in contrast with the ideas of the greatest teachers of the past. Plato, for example, the greatest philosopher of the

ancient world, said, in speaking of one of a group of unfortunate children, "Expose it as a creature for which no provision is made." That this was the common view of children before Christ came is shown by a letter written by an Egyptian Greek to his wife in September or October of the year 1 A. D. The original was found among the papyrus documents that have recently been discovered in Egypt. It reads as follows: "Hilarion to Alis . . . greetings. . . . Know that we are still even now in Alexandria. Do not fidget, if, at the general return, I stay in Alexandria. I pray and beseech you, take care of the little child, and as soon as we have our wages, I will send you up something. If you are delivered, if it was a male, let it live; if it was a female, cast it out. . . . How can I forget you? So don't fidget." The letter is not an unkind one; it is sympathetic, masculine, direct, and friendly. And then it ends with the suggestion, inconceivable to us to-day, that if the baby is a girl, it need not be kept. It can be put out either on the land or in the river, left to kite or crocodile.

Perhaps the greatest influence exerted by Jesus on the common life of mankind has been indirect. Through the stories, pictures, poems, and hymns, based on the second chapter of Luke, the ideal Christ-child has become a universal possession. The birth of Christ has been depicted by at least eighty different artists such as Correggio, Raphael, Murillo, and Rossetti. These are the most common pictures on the walls of our homes, school-buildings, and churches. Great poets like Browning, Tennyson, Milton, and Whittier have exalted childhood by their references to Jesus. Dickens' *Christmas Carol* suggests the power of the Christmas spirit in changing family life in many nations.

3. By Disregarding the Custom of Fasting Jesus Calls down Further Criticism on His Head.

The Jewish teachers asked Jesus why his disciples did not observe the custom of fasting. It was required of faithful Jews that they abstain from food on Mondays and Thursdays. Jesus paid no attention to this and no doubt often attended a dinner given by publicans or sinners on one of these fast days. His reply to the question was: "No man sews a piece of new cloth on an old garment." He meant that his religion was different from the old; it was one of joy and happiness in the natural blessings of life.

He did not believe in going through these external forms when your heart was not in them. The Jews expected to earn merit in heaven by ceremonial acts that had nothing to do with their inner life. Jesus always condemned that. His idea was that it was hypocritical to put on a long face and go without food when the heart was rejoicing over such good news as he had brought to men.

4. Jesus' New Idea of the Sabbath is Criticised.

One day Jesus and his disciples while out walking pulled off some grains of wheat growing in a field, rubbed the grains in their hands to remove the parts not eatable, and ate the grains. The Pharisees criticised Jesus for this on the ground that he and his disciples had done work on the Sabbath by rubbing the wheat. These petty regulations were offensive to Jesus not only because they failed to contribute to religious life but also because they led to hypocrisy. For example, there was a regulation that no one should walk more than three thousand feet beyond his dwelling on the Sabbath. But if at this point a man should

deposit on Friday food enough for two meals, that would constitute another "dwelling," and so he might walk another three thousand feet. In literally hundreds of ways they deceived themselves and others by these curious interpretations of their laws. Jesus saw that it was all a part of their external and formal system. In condemning that system Jesus was in full agreement with the Old Testament prophets who stood for the great principles of justice, mercy, and the love of God. They would have been astonished could they have seen the complicated system of hypocritical explanations which the later Jews had built up on the great principles of Hebrew law and prophecy.

Jesus did a great service for mankind in stating clearly that such a system made men slaves. He asserted that the Sabbath was made for man's good and happiness. This was an important position to take, for it meant that institutions, however sacred, should never be regarded as ends in themselves. They are useful only as they are a means to better living. Jesus here again announces a fundamental and far-reaching principle: "Persons alone are truly valuable and sacred in themselves; the sacredness of all places, and of all institutions, even of the church and of the sacraments and of the Sabbath, is wholly borrowed" (King, *The Ethics of Jesus*).

5. The Four Points of the Controversy and Its Significance to Jesus and to Us.

The Jews were offended, first, by the strong personality of Jesus, which enabled him to say to a repentant man, regardless of Jewish customs and forms, "Thy sins are forgiven thee"; second, by his idea that no rule should forbid the association of good people with

others, whether the others belonged to the same class or not; third, by disregarding the custom of fasting, which was an important form of the old religion; fourth, by breaking the Sabbath, which was a fundamental thing in Judaism.

This controversy resulted in a deliberate plot on the part of the Pharisees to put Jesus to death. The greatness of their anger against him is suggested by Mark 3:6, which says that they went to the extent of plotting with their chief enemies, the Herodians, to destroy Jesus. He seemed to be a much more dangerous enemy to their religion than the followers of Herod's family, the loyalists of Judea, who had been so cruel to the Pharisees. This, then, was the beginning of that struggle that led the Pharisees at last to demand of Pilate that he should crucify Jesus.

To us Jesus' opposition to the Pharisees has meant a new emphasis on the worth of every individual soul regardless of race or class distinction, and freedom from burdensome forms and ceremonies that in the end lead to hypocrisy. It has taught us to distinguish sharply between the customs and institutions that help build up human personality and those that are a waste of time and money. It teaches the great truth which Lowell presented in his *Present Crisis*:

“New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast
of Truth.”

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Name three subjects which Jesus talked about during his tour through Galilee.

2. Describe the healing of the palsied man, which was the occasion of the beginning of the Pharisees' opposition to Jesus.
3. On account of what friendships that Jesus had made did the Pharisees criticise him?
4. Why did Jesus so often stand up for the outcasts?
5. How did Jesus change the attitude of the world toward children?
6. Why was Jesus not interested in fasting?
7. What was Paul's view of Jewish forms? II Corinthians 3:6 and Romans 8:3.
8. In the controversy with the Jews over the Sabbath what principle did the Master announce?
9. What has humanity gained from Jesus' opposition to the Pharisees?

Oral Discussion

1. How did Jesus challenge class distinctions among the Jews?
2. Show that the Jews won in the struggle at the time but that Jesus has been vindicated by history.
3. What class distinctions still exist among us?
4. What was Plato's view of little children?
5. Name some classical paintings of the Nativity.

Special Assignments

1. Write a sketch of the Pharisees, showing their beliefs, their good points, and their faults.
2. Consider the sense in which an apostle (John 20:23) or any Christian is authorized to forgive sins.
3. Describe Millais' *Christ in the House of his Parents*.
4. Read the references to Paul's letters at the head of this chapter and make a list of the points in which he agreed with Jesus.

CHAPTER VIII

JESUS' ASSISTANTS

Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16.

I. The Need.

Isaiah once said (8:16): "Bind up the testimony, seal the teaching among my disciples." Every great leader who desires to build for the future gathers about him chosen companions who shall carry on his work after he has gone. There were three reasons why this would seem important to Jesus at the end of this period of great popularity in Galilee.

First, the crowds that followed him were more than he could teach, and very many of them were sick and discouraged. It was more than one person could do to help them all. So Jesus gradually gathered from among his followers those who seemed best fitted to be his assistants.

Second, his rejection at Nazareth must have revealed to him unexpected sources of opposition, and even of danger to his life. To Nazareth he had returned with honor from his successes in other towns. But there he was met with such unbelief that he could not perform miracles (Mark 6:1-6).

Third, the Jewish teachers that belonged to the party of the Pharisees followed Jesus persistently to find fault with him. Many of them, no doubt, were sincere in their effort to preserve the old-time respect for the oral law. Jesus had so much favor with the masses that they thought his open disregard for the regula-

tions concerning eating with sinners, breaking the Sabbath, and fasting would have a disastrous effect on Judaism.

2. Jesus' Care in Selecting His Assistants.

No official board or group of leaders ever accomplished as much as the disciples. Some one has suggested that the greatest miracle of history was the transformation of these common men into the founders of Christianity. But it may not be correct to call these men common. Jesus had spent a great deal of time in selecting them. The first four, three of whom later formed the inner circle of his companions, were well known to the Master as disciples of John the Baptist. Jesus had probably been with them in Judea. Peter had a home in Capernaum, and his three partners in the fishing business, James and John and Andrew were evidently men of practical ability. Jesus knew them not only as men of zeal in religion, but also as employers of labor on the sea.

Some time later Matthew the tax-collector was chosen, but not until Jesus had studied him well. We may believe that many earnest conversations took place between them before Matthew gave up his position as collector of internal revenue for the Roman government. If Papias, a bishop in Phrygia, is correct, it was this disciple who wrote the sayings of Jesus in Aramaic, and thus preserved them until they found a permanent home in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. This would indicate that Matthew was an educated man.

Of one of the disciples Jesus said, "I have prayed for thee," indicating that he gave personal attention to each. Judas, the only one not a Galilean, was probably

no exception. He had come from Kerioth beyond Hebron, and therefore shown unusual zeal in going so far from home to become a disciple. There are indications that he had unusual ability. Jesus may not have been mistaken in Judas, for it is possible that those scholars are correct who think that he meant by the betrayal to force Jesus to declare himself as the Messiah, and so should be considered as a mistaken and unwise disciple rather than a traitor. At any rate Jesus took great care to choose the right men, for Luke reports that "he continued all night in prayer to God" before he made public his choice of assistants.

3. Description of the Twelve.

Much interest attaches to the little group to whom Jesus left the task of founding the Christian Church. There is some uncertainty regarding the correct list because Luke substituted for Thaddæus, Judas the son of James. Following the lists in Mark and Matthew we find agreement as to the three groups, but a rearrangement of the names within the groups of four.

MARK

Peter, James, John, Andrew.
Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas.
James, son of Alphæus, Thadæus.
Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot.

MATTHEW

Peter, Andrew, James, John.
Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew.
James, son of Alphæus, Thadæus.
Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot.

C. R. Brown in a recent book (*These Twelve*) has characterized nine of these men as follows:

Peter, The Man of Impulse.
John, The Man of Temper.
Philip, The Matter-of-Fact Man.

Thomas, The Man of Moods.

Judas, The Man Who Might Have Been.

James, The Man of Silence.

Andrew, The Man of Decision.

Matthew, The Man of Business.

Simon Zealotes, The Man Who Was a Flame of Fire.

Zimmermann's *Christ and the Fishermen* furnishes us an interesting study of the faces of Jesus, James, and John, and the father of the last two. The strong sympathetic face of Jesus and its pleading attitude contrasts with the questioning face of the old man. For half a century the father of James and John has held a different view of religion from that which his sons have now adopted. He is in grave doubt about the wisdom of their following the new teacher. The faces of the young men show that they are eager to go with Jesus. They had been with him in Judea when they were disciples of John. They had there proved themselves very earnest men. For this reason Jesus was anxious to secure them as assistants in his work.

Of the first six apostles Peter was to play altogether the foremost rôle in the history of Christianity. He was impulsive and imaginative, active and kind-hearted, open to new ideas, but not very dependable. He denied Jesus to save himself, and later he was charged with hypocrisy by Paul (Galatians 2:4 and 11-14). Yet it was Peter who preached so powerfully that he won three thousand people to Christ in one sermon (Acts 2:41), and who first preached the gospel among the Gentiles (Acts 10). There is good evidence that he was the leader also in spreading the faith in Jerusalem. Later in Rome he was an assistant to Paul, notwithstanding their early differences. It is believed that it

was Peter who furnished the material to Mark for his gospel. Bishop Papias says that Mark was interpreter for Peter in Rome and that Mark got his facts about Jesus from Peter. Whatever else Jesus meant by Matthew 16:18, he surely signified that Peter was to be one of the leading founders of the Christian Church.

James and John are characterized as "Sons of Thunder," which suggests that they were rough and ready men, prepared for fearless action. This is hard to understand, for we have learned to think of John as modest and humble, quiet and loving. The great artists, as DaVinci in *The Last Supper*, have depicted him as a gentle and spiritual character, nearest to the Master himself in his temperament. Also some scholars have given him credit for writing the Fourth Gospel. Probably we have been misled by all these extra-biblical descriptions. Just as we must think of Jesus as much more virile and efficient than the artists and poets have described him, so we should think of John, in the terms of the Bible, as hot-tempered and fiery, eager to call down fire from heaven on a Samaritan village that would not entertain Jesus (Luke 9:54). When persecution overtook the Christians, James was the first to die (Acts 12:2).

Peter, John, and James formed an inner circle of the apostles. They were with Jesus in his greatest victories and in his severest trials. In the home of Jairus Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John on the occasion of the healing of the sick girl. On the Mount of Transfiguration these three spent the night with Jesus. In the Garden of Gethsemane he asked these same friends to watch with him. Among all the disciples these three were most congenial to Jesus, and later

history shows that they understood best his plans for the Christian Church.

Thomas, Simon the Zealot, and Judas each have something peculiar about them. Thomas is known as the doubter. According to the Fourth Gospel, for no description is given of him in the first three, Thomas was the one who had to be convinced of the resurrection of Jesus by definite evidence. Jesus gently rebuked him for this saying, "Happy are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

Simon the Zealot may have been chosen by Jesus to represent that large group of people who believed it their duty to use violence in bringing in the Kingdom of God. Simon had probably been a member of the group that followed Judas, leader of a revolt against Rome twenty years before. Jesus may have been attracted to him by his unselfish devotion to the cause and his readiness to act.

Judas has always been a puzzle to historians. There must have been something attractive about him which interested Jesus. There is an old tradition which may explain the mystery. An artist once planned to paint a masterpiece showing the Twelve seated about the Master in varying attitudes of aspiration and devotion. He selected his models with the greatest care. When he came to paint John, he finally found a young man who was strikingly handsome. He had the face and the presence of a veritable Apollo; and his charm was not altogether physical—there was a look of high purpose and spiritual aspiration written across his features, as if by the finger of the Lord. He seemed to have been created expressly to serve as a suitable model for the figure of John in the great painting.

When the artist came to paint Judas he went for a

model to the lowest parts of the city, where criminals were bred, and to the prisons, where men were paying the penalty for their evil doing. For a time he did not seem to find just the man who in his looks and bearing might serve as the Judas of his canvas. But one day in a back street, he chanced upon a man whose furtive look, whose hard, unsympathetic face, whose sordid expression met all the requirements. He easily made a bargain with him to come to his studio the next day to sit for the figure of Judas. As the man was sitting there one day looking intently on the face of John, the artist remarked, "That is a handsome face." "Yes," replied the man who was there to represent Judas, "it was once my own." Five years before that he had sat for the portrait of John. These few years of sin and shame had destroyed the image of one who looked like the beloved disciple. We might almost say that there is in each one of us, potentially, a John or a Judas, according to the set of one's will and the measure of his faith.

"One ship turns east and another west
With the selfsame winds that blow.
'Tis the set of the sails and not the gales
Which tell us the way to go.

Like the winds of the sea are the waves of fate
As we voyage along through life.
'Tis the set of the soul which decides the goal,
And not the calm or the strife."

4. Jesus Sends the Twelve Disciples on a Preaching Tour in Galilee.

Soon after his rejection at Nazareth Jesus felt more than ever the importance of getting his message to all people. Also he desired that his disciples should have experience which would prepare them to be his successors. So he sent them out to do the things that

they had seen him do. They were to go two by two in different parts of Galilee. They were to take no change of clothing, no money, and no food. This was evidently a sign of the urgency of their mission. They were to go into all the villages and teach in the synagogues and in the market-places how the people should prepare themselves for the coming of the Kingdom. Mark says (6:7) that Jesus gave them authority to cure people who were possessed with evil spirits, and at the end of the account he tells that the disciples preached repentance, cast out evil spirits, and healed many sick. Many writers believe that the account of the sending out of the Seventy in Luke 10:1-24 is simply another version of this story of the Twelve.

5. The Later History of the Apostles.

Peter, James, and John are the only ones who figure largely in the New Testament. Peter and John were the most active in spreading the gospel, and James was the first martyr (Acts 12:2). Tradition says that Peter joined Paul in Rome and became his interpreter. Recently a burial place of about 200 A. D. was discovered bearing the names of Paul and Peter, and there is no reason to doubt that both died in Rome. It would be like Peter to insist upon being crucified with his head down, as punishment for denying his master; that is the report which has been handed down. It is believed by many that John became a bishop in Asia Minor with his residence in Ephesus.

Nothing is certain concerning the records of the rest of the Twelve. Philip and Bartholomew may have been missionaries in Phrygia, as some early writers have it. Thomas is said to have been a missionary to Parthia. We may be sure that they all, if they escaped

early death, did their best to spread the gospel which Jesus had taught them.

6. The Women Who Helped.

The list of the assistants of Jesus would be incomplete without the women who gave money and time to the promotion of the new religion. These faithful ones referred to in Mark 15:40, 41; 16:9; Matthew 26:6-13; Luke 8:2, 3; 24:10; John 19:25, were in constant attendance on Jesus during his Galilean ministry. When he made that dread journey to Jerusalem they fearlessly went with him to make his way more comfortable. His attitude toward them has done much to win for woman that position of equality which she enjoys to-day.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Three reasons why Jesus began to train men to be his assistants.
2. What share did some of these men afterward have in founding Christianity?
3. What shows that Jesus took great pains in selecting the right men?
4. How does Zimmermann's *Christ and the Disciples* show Jesus' care in securing the right kind of disciples?
5. Name and characterize the first four disciples.
6. Tell the occasions when the three who formed the inner circle of Jesus' apostles were with him.
7. What part did Peter play in the history of the early church?
8. Describe Philip, Thomas and Judas. What shows that the message of the Twelve on their preaching tour was very urgent?

Oral Discussion

1. What characteristics did the disciples possess more important than learning or riches?
2. How may Judas be defended?
3. What may the Greek names of two of the apostles indicate?

4. What was the fate of these men? Acts 12:3-19.
5. Why may Jesus have chosen Simon the Zealot?

Special Assignments

1. Read Charles R. Brown's *These Twelve* and write a description of nine of the disciples.
2. Write an essay on the part that the disciples played in the mission work of the early church according to tradition.

Part 4

THE TEACHER

CHAPTER IX

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NEW IDEALS

Matthew 5: 1-48; Luke 6: 27-36; Philippians 2: 5-11; 4: 8.

I. The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount.

The choice of twelve disciples marks the beginning of a definite organization in the group that followed Jesus. When he had selected his twelve assistants he took occasion to deliver an address which "has become the most cherished possession of the western world" (Matthew, chapters 5-7). As the choice of the number twelve for the apostles indicates that Jesus recognized the twelve tribes of Israel, so his new statement of the laws of Christian conduct shows that he had in mind the Law of Moses. His new kingdom needed to be clearly defined in contrast with that of Israel. The Sermon on the Mount was a sort of constitution, outlining clearly the basis of Christianity, and announcing principles from which men must not depart if they desire to remain true to the original purpose of the Founder.

Jesus was now at the height of his popularity in Galilee. People thronged about him by the thousands to be healed and to hear his cheerful message. One morning after he had spent all night in prayer he called

the twelve disciples and appointed them to be his official companions and advisers. Tissot, in his painting of the scene of the sermon, locates it a few miles west of the Sea of Galilee on a hill called the Horns of Hattin. Jesus is standing on an elevation on the side of the hill and gathered close about him are the newly chosen disciples. On the hillside in front a multitude of people has already gathered, and a long line of others is seen approaching from Capernaum. In the distant foreground is the blue sea and dotting the landscape on all sides are the villages and cities of Galilee. So great in moral quality were the teachings uttered by Jesus at this time that even one who does not consider Jesus divine has said that this sermon counts as one of the most wonderful collections of ethical teaching in the world.

2. An Outline of the Sermon.

Since this address is regarded as the most important religious document ever printed it is well to present here two different outlines. Professor Votaw in the *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible* offers the following description:

- A. The ideal life described. Matthew 5:1-16.
 - a. Its characteristics. Matthew 5:1-12.
 - b. Its mission. Matthew 5:13-16.
- B. Its relation to the earlier Hebrew ideal. Matthew 5:17-20.
- C. The outworkings of the ideal life. Matthew 5:21-7:12.
 - a. In deeds and motives. Matthew 5:21-48.
 - b. In real religious worship. Matthew 6:1-18.
 - c. In trust and self-devotion. Matthew 6:19-34.
 - d. In treatment of others. Matthew 7:1-12.
- D. The duty of living the ideal life. Matthew 7:13-27.

For students beginning the study of the sermon the following simple outline may be helpful to remember.

1. A description of those who belong in the Kingdom of God. Matthew 5:3-16.
2. A comparison of the conduct required by Jesus with that taught in the Old Testament. Matthew 5:17-6:18.
3. One lofty purpose and simple faith is the rule of life. Matthew 6:19-34.
4. Do not judge others. Matthew 7:1-6.
5. Have faith in God's willingness to bless. Matthew 7:7-11.
6. Do good, not merely talk about it. Matthew 7:12-27.

3. A Problem about the Sermon.

We have in Matthew (5-7) and Luke (6:20-49) two differing versions of the Sermon on the Mount. The question arises: "Did Jesus deliver at one time and place the sermon as printed in Matthew?" If so how shall we account for the report in Luke? The record of it in Luke is so much shorter and differs so much in the wording of the various sayings that various explanations have been given to account for the two forms. If we try to imagine the situation we may clear up the difficulty. Those who listened to Jesus at the Horns of Hattin repeated his Aramaic words to their friends until by word of mouth its message was spread far and wide. Some twenty years later Matthew collected the various sayings in that sermon and also many of the other sayings of Jesus in a little pamphlet and dated them all as given at the time when the disciples were chosen.

On the other hand the group of sayings which had actually been delivered by Jesus on that occasion was handed down by different persons in Aramaic, trans-

lated into Greek, and finally became a part of the Gospel of Luke. This theory, which is generally accepted, regards the report in Luke as more nearly representing what Jesus actually said that day at the Horns of Hattin, while Matthew is believed to have put into his one address many sayings and parables originally given by Jesus on different occasions. This is in keeping with Matthew's habit of grouping the teachings of Jesus without regard to the dates when they were given.

4. Watchwords of the New World.

One of the achievements of Jesus was to picture in words a new world, a new kind of civilization which he was seeking to inaugurate. To appreciate what Jesus meant is harder than for a boy to appreciate fine literature. One day a class in English literature was painfully reciting on the grammar and syntax of a passage in Milton. The principal entered the room, picked up *Paradise Lost*, and began to read. It was a revelation, and for at least one member of the class it opened the door into a new and wonderful world. From that time on literature took on a new meaning. So Jesus made real and possible a new kind of life. The best description of it is found in the eight sentences, commonly called the "Beatitudes" which form the introduction to the Sermon on the Mount. They would be difficult to understand if Jesus had not come and given them a perfect illustration. To a world like that of Mussolini they do not apply. Jesus was picturing the kind of a man needed for his kind of a world, which stood in sharp contrast to the materialistic, calculating, self-confident, hard, and selfish society which counts Jesus impractical. Here is his description of the Christian.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. This is the key to the first door of the kingdom. It means happy are they who have put away pride in all its forms—pride of riches, knowledge, achievement, goodness. The poor in spirit are the humble-minded, those who are willing to be taught. Dante put pride at the head of all the sins, because it separates one from his fellows and kills love. Jesus did not recommend the inferiority complex. The Christian is not to underestimate himself nor be craven-minded, but to see himself as he is and to give his life to things that are real. Kipling foresaw the time coming when

“No one shall work for money,
And no one shall toil for fame;
But each for the love of working,
And each in his separate star
Shall draw the thing as he sees it
For the God of things as they are.”

That means that false standards, false pride shall pass away and men shall strike the rock bottom of reality in the thought of themselves and in their dealings with others. This is true humility. This is the place of great achievement, and the condition of happiness.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. At first glance this seems so untrue that we seek for a hidden meaning, and say it signifies happy are they who are sorry for their sins, blessed are they that repent. But it is wiser to take Jesus' saying in its plain sense—happy is the man who has troubles of his own for he is able to sympathize with the great mass of people who suffer. He shall be comforted because he enters into a deeper life of love and friendship than would otherwise have been possible. “There are those who know how to comfort mourners with such beauti-

ful friendliness as to make the mourning blessed because it called out such comfort."

This comfort, then, is not a thing of future life alone. It belongs to Christian experience on the earth. Christ has so enriched and deepened human life that sorrow has a new meaning. Long before Jesus it was taught in the Book of Job that sorrow and suffering lead to a new insight (42: 5). A distinguished modern writer declares: "Those who have had to bear sorrow will agree with me that bereavement is the deepest initiation into the mystery of human life, an initiation more searching and profound than even happy love. Love remembered and consecrated by grief belongs, more clearly than the happy intercourse of friends, to the eternal world. It has proved itself stronger than death."

Blessed are the meek. If we recall that these Beatitudes are the principles that Jesus exemplified in his own life we shall not make the mistake of describing meekness as cowardly submission to wrong or a tame endurance of injustice. The meek man does have a gentle spirit toward those who wrong him, not because he is afraid, but because he thinks less of his own pride than of the harm that would come from a quarrel. His gentleness arises from his pity for the enemy who is blind with hate and passion. Thinking less of his own self than of the general good he controls his temper. So meekness may be defined as self-control. It is the opposite of self-assertiveness. Henley's popular poem *Invictus* is not Christian:

"I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate.
I am the captain of my soul."

That is the pagan, hard, and stubborn spirit. It is self against the world. It is loud and declamatory. The really strong man is quiet, gentle, meek, like Abraham Lincoln, who in many ways was like the Master in his meekness and lowliness of heart. The whole power to possess the earth lies in this gentle strength exemplified by Jesus and called by him meekness.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness. This Beatitude praises those who strive for the goal of goodness, not those who think that they have attained it. Indeed, it says, not that they shall attain righteousness, but that they shall be satisfied while working for it. Paul once said, "I press toward the mark." Struggle for perfection is the admirable thing in a man;

"What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me."

It is the struggle that constitutes the real joy of life, the race, and not the goal.

"So the chase takes up one's life, that's all.
No sooner the old hope goes to ground
Than a new one, straight to the self-same mark,
I shape me—
Ever
Removed."

If we cease the struggle, accept a lower standard, take a lower road to peace, say that Christ's standard was not practical, then we abandon his high enterprise. "The Christianity which is not always pioneering in the sphere of the impossible, will soon be rejected as mere lumber. . . . Where Christ ceases to be a challenge to our conscience in every direction, he will soon cease to be any kind of comfort to our hearts. . . . We are living spiritually on a kind of slope, in which there

is no alternative between the fight to move upward and the slackness that drifts downward. God quicken us into the hunger and thirst after righteousness!"

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. There are persons who refuse to repeat the Lord's Prayer because they declare they cannot say sincerely: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." It is possible to forgive the wrong and to forget. That is to be merciful. Joseph's brothers conspired against him and sold him as a slave into Egypt. In later years when he was their superior in every respect he freely showed them mercy. In *The Atlantic Monthly* for April, 1926, G. H. Palmer calls attention to the "Forgiveness of Excuse." Some friend has done a great wrong. At first we do not think it right to show mercy, but as we come to know all the circumstances we see that there is an excuse; we ourselves would have done the same evil under the same conditions. We put ourselves in the other man's place and we have mercy on him. "To understand all is to forgive all." Palmer goes on to say, "Truly great minds are charitable. The sublimest case of forgiveness recorded . . . comes from the Cross. 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.'" A test of our ability to have mercy is to forgive the Germans for their part in the Great War. They are entitled to the Forgiveness of Excuse.

We need to remember what Shakespeare said: "Consider this, that in the course of justice, none of us should see salvation." And mercy is blessed "both to him that gives and to him that takes." God cannot forgive the unmerciful man, for there is a hardness in his heart that only active love on his own part can remove. He must enter into Christ's plan, be a member of Christ's Kingdom, for that simply means adopting the

loving way of life. Blessed are the merciful for they have entered into a new life where they also can be forgiven.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blindness is a common defect. We are blind to the beauty in the sunset and in the flower. We may live for years in the house with a beautiful character and fail to perceive through that covering of humility and commonplaceness the beauty of the life. We blindly walk over and amidst "Acres of Diamonds" year after year and miss much of the glory of life. It is a matter of insight, a question of the right mental standpoint. One must get himself into the correct attitude to life, he must occupy the right position in order to see the vision. Standing in front of the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris one sees above the doors a great round window of dirty glass, standing within where the light comes through that window one sees the stained glass shining with glory. So it is with our experience; if you take the right attitude you will see God.

What is the right attitude? This Beatitude has lost something of its greatness because we have limited and narrowed the meaning of "pure in heart" to freedom from impure desires. It is more than that. It has to do with the purpose of a man's whole life. "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." If the main aim of your life is right, then you can see clearly. Sincerity is the great thing. It is the sincerity of purpose rather than satisfaction in accomplishment that gives the vision of God.

"Not on the vulgar mass
Called work must sentence pass,
Things done, that took the eye and had the price;
But all, the world's coarse thumb

And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account;
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount."

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Peacemakers are not simply peaceful persons but creators of situations in which men work together in good-will for the common good. They actively promote love in human society. This Beatitude has not been taken seriously, otherwise Christian churches and our Christian civilization would not be what it is. It would seem to exclude from the number of the "children of God" all who stir up strife or promote war. If this saying of Jesus be taken at par value, whisperers, meddlers, tale-bearers, busybodies, tatlers, and mischief-makers are not among the children of God.

What joy would come to this earth if all wars among the nations should cease! If religious denominations should cease their rivalries and disputes, and the occasions for jealousy should be removed from the different classes of society, a good start would be made toward bringing the Kingdom of Heaven to this world. James Reid, in a helpful little book, *The Key to the Kingdom*, tells a good story from the life of Robert Louis Stevenson. The natives of Samoa wanted to show their gratitude to their great friend, and decided to do it by building a road from his house to the village. "Nothing could have been more symbolic of friendship than this removal of obstacles from the path by which he and they could come together. They were smoothing the way of fellowship. They called the new way the 'Road of the Loving Heart.' While they were at it, a ship's captain who was visiting the island, asked what they were doing. When they told him, his imagination was

touched, and he took off his coat saying, 'I'd like to take a hand in this job.' Surely that is how the work of the peacemaker appeals to every Christian mind as imagination, in the light of the Kingdom of God, sees the glory of bringing men together. To create fellowship, to remove obstacles from it, that is our business. The world is at present like a family without the family spirit. Its very intimacy is its peril as it is its opportunity."

Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Has the world so changed since the time of Jesus that the poor in spirit, the meek, those who strive steadily for goodness, the merciful, the pure in heart, and the peacemakers will no longer be persecuted? Two things have certainly reduced the amount of persecution that Christians suffer. First, the world is better. It is better educated, more humane, more sympathetic. An international mind has come into being; in all the nations there are people who think alike on the great questions of life. Second, there is less seeking after martyrdom on the part of earnest Christians. In the early days some Christians actually desired to win the martyr's crown and went out of their way to invite trouble.

Nevertheless, conditions still exist under which persecution may arise. The faithful observance of Jesus' directions, however tactfully done, will arouse antagonism on the score of money, race, class distinctions, or social habits. Although the old, cruel methods of making people conform or die have passed away, there are yet many refined ways of letting Christians know that they are too far in advance of their times. But if we follow

"the cross that turns not back"

we shall often incur opposition and even hatred. We shall lose profitable positions, and sacrifice social standing; we shall give for other causes money that would surround us with luxuries that our neighbors enjoy. It is very hard to deny ourselves the approval of the public and to endure the scorn of the public, but it is a joy to be loyal as our fathers were loyal and to carry on the great Christian tradition.

5. An Estimate of the Beatitudes.

Henry Churchill King calls the Beatitudes "Jesus' map of life." They are the foundation-stones of the new era which Jesus came to inaugurate, they are the secret of individual happiness. No man who wishes to be what he ought to be can wisely ignore them. In these few principles of life Jesus showed that "He was a spiritual creator: like a master architect with a new vision of the Kingdom of God on earth, like a master musician composing a new song for all mankind to sing, like a master artist shaping the perfect man, and also the perfect humanity, as God would have them to be" (Gilkey, *Jesus and Our Generation*).

In this vestibule to the Sermon on the Mount with its eight wonderful columns Jesus at once reveals the spirit and substance of his whole message. Here is love at the centre of the world in the person of a Father; here the brotherhood of man; here the controlling principles of a perfect humanity. One is not to be judged by his wealth or social distinction or by his knowledge or public office but by the quality of his inner life. This creation of the final type of religion was the great achievement of Jesus, and he crowned his work by exemplifying his principles in his own life.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. What was the occasion of the Sermon on the Mount?
2. Describe the scene, using Tissot's *Sermon on the Mount*.
3. Give an outline of the sermon, and commit it to memory.
4. When we compare Matthew and Luke, what problem arises about the sermon?
5. Quote what seem to you the four best Beatitudes.
6. What did Jesus mean by "the poor in spirit?"
7. What did he mean by the "meek"?
8. Give an illustration of the new insight that comes to one who is "pure in heart."
9. Show that Henley's *Invictus* is more pagan than Christian in spirit.

Oral Discussion

1. Tell the life story of one of the Beatitudes from the time it was spoken by Jesus until it found a home in the Gospel of Matthew.
2. What was the Aramaic language?
3. Why would the Beatitudes not fit Mussolini's world?
4. What is the difference between "peaceful" and "peace-makers?"

Special Assignments

1. Write a detailed picture of Tissot's *Sermon on the Mount*.
2. Read Charles M. Sheldon's *In His Steps* and select from it some suggestion that seems to you revolutionary and yet appeals to you as workable and right.
3. Write an essay on the progress made toward universal peace since the Great War.

CHAPTER X

THE NEW RELIGION CONTRASTED WITH THE OLD

Matthew 5:17-48; 9:14-17; Romans 9:31-10:13.

I. A Test of Jesus' Greatness.

It has often been asked whether Christianity is the final religion. Will another savior arise and establish a better faith than Christianity? One reason for believing that Christ's religion is final is its universality. Mozoomdar in India wrote in the preface to his *Oriental Christ* that Jesus was to him a perfect savior. While some of the forms of Western Christianity would not apply well in the East, yet the spirit of Jesus and his teachings were perfectly applicable to the Orient. Americans, English, French, and Germans, as well as Icelanders, North American Indians, and men of all races have found that the teachings of Christ satisfied their minds. This is so because Jesus dealt with motives, with the inner life. However the races of mankind may differ, it is only by varied proportions of the same elements, and there is no motive or affection to which any people can claim a monopoly. There is a path to heaven from every clime, and the whole race is a unity so far as all great emotions are concerned. Jesus brushed aside all peculiar Jewish forms and appealed only to those elements which all races share. So his religion is absolutely universal. His influence has never been limited to any country, group, or race.

His teachings have never been outgrown, although there have been tremendous changes in the world since his day. His ideals still stand far above us, and there is reason to believe that Goethe was correct when he said mankind will never progress beyond the simple teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. But even more than principles which seem eternal was the fact of Jesus' personality. A Madras student, himself not a Christian, stated the point exactly in the following words: "I am grateful for the story of a man who practised what he preached." Jesus' supreme gift to mankind was his life, which was a perfect illustration and embodiment of his principles.

"And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds
In loveliness of perfect deeds
More strong than all poetic thought."

When we turn from the Beatitudes, which were an introduction to the Sermon on the Mount, to the first main point of the sermon itself we shall find the secret of Jesus' power.

2. The Appeal to Motives.

The first main section of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:17-48) shows that Jesus' religion was of the heart, not of the outward act. Jesus contrasts the old law with his new law item by item. The old law had come to mean the literal obeying of hundreds of precepts and external requirements. Good Jews were so busy going through the forms that they lost the inner purpose of those forms. In their effort to keep the Sabbath strictly they became hard and hypocritical and actually contradicted the very principle of mercy for which the day was established (compare Mark 3:4, 5 with Deuteronomy 5:14). Jesus taught that he

came not to destroy the good things in the old religion but to fulfil the old by adding to it something deeper and more important. The goodness which he required was much greater than that of the old system (Matthew 5:20). A man might "keep all the commandments from his youth up" and yet fail to be truly religious (Mark 10:17-22).

A religion of negative commands might do for children and for the childhood of the race, but not for universal mankind through the ages. It was the great accomplishment of Jesus to take law off the throne and put there the human heart. Man was not made to keep a lot of laws, but the laws were made to make men good and happy. The Master saw that a religion that was to be eternal and universal could not consist of laws handed down from an autocrat for a special race, but must consist of persons living on terms of good-will toward each other, under the guidance of a loving Father or a great Friend in Heaven. Jesus described religion in terms of personal friendship and so made it free from bondage to race, the customs of any one era of world history, and from law which leads to evasion and hypocrisy. This is why he is winning the world.

Love was the centre of his religion. He saw a loving God at the heart of the universe. To him the great problem of religion was how to get men to live the life of genuine, intelligent, thoroughgoing good-will. It could not be done by force from without, but by some powerful appeal from within. So Jesus in his famous Sermon makes an appeal to motives.

The love at the centre of the world is a person who is carrying on a wonderful enterprise. He needs the loyalty of every individual in the world. *Loyalty to our great Leader* becomes a strong motive. It may be

more intense even than patriotism. Patriotism is loyalty to country. It is easily aroused. An enemy attacks a ship, kills our fellow countrymen. An appeal is made and thousands offer themselves for self-sacrificing service. But such loyalty has distressing drawbacks. It means the murder of other human beings, and the destruction of property—all because of a mistake. Loyalty to love means the abandonment of yourself to the highest, utter devotion to the Heavenly Father, who has a great cause at stake. Loyalty to him is a motive that may become as effective as the loyalty of a child to a human father, or of a citizen to his country. It is this motive which Jesus makes the basis of all his appeals in the Sermon (5:9, 16, 44-48; 6:1, 4, 6, 14, 15, 18, 25-34; also 6:8, 9; 7:7-11).

This motive of loyalty to the Heavenly Father involves another great motive—*self-realization*. The traitor to his country, Benedict Arnold, proved in the outcome to be a traitor to himself. His life in England was humiliating and wretched in the extreme. None of his ambitions were realized. Loyalty is a central principle of our moral life. If it breaks down at one point, if disloyalty appears in one member, the whole body is weakened. It is a germ of evil that multiplies rapidly and soon the whole body is diseased.

The high hope with which each new generation of young people enters upon life is well expressed by Mary C. Davies:

"Not some obscure, grim fate
Decides the world's far destiny, or ours.
Our wills, our hopes, our visions are the powers
That shape our futures, and the world's, as well.
Let us, then, greatly build the invisible
House of the world's soul, as we build our own;
Each thought, each act, a stone,"

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus bases many appeals on this nobility, unity, and consistency of the inner life. How to make the most of self in a world of suspicion and hate, of meanness and jealousy, that is the problem which Jesus solved. A proper respect and love for the Father results in a proper regard for every one of the Father's children, including oneself. This precious life that is given to us is a unit. It is not possible to serve two masters (6: 22-24); if a man breaks the moral law at one point, the whole life is degraded (5: 19, 29, 30). We think that "we may fall below the highest in our love now, and find it meaning the same afterward. We can be impure, and still leave our honesty unaffected. We can be false, and still be pure. *But we cannot.* These demands only voice Jesus' deep conviction, that the very nature of man calls for a thoroughgoing consistency in the inner life" (H. C. King).

A third motive to living which pervades the Sermon on the Mount has been stated by Harnack as follows: "Jesus was the first to bring *the value of every human soul* to light, and what he did no one can any more undo." He taught that anger should be regarded as seriously as murder, because to abuse a man and break down his self-respect denies his worth. It is an attempt to murder his soul. Outside the Sermon Jesus in many places exalts human life. Children of the common people, women of the streets, men who had lost all regard for themselves, were treated by him as of infinite worth. We all have an instinct to do this, "but with Jesus it was so strong that it determined all his viewpoints and activities. He affirmed the humane instinct consciously and intelligently, and raised it to the dignity of a social principle. This alone would be enough

to mark him out as a new type, prophetic, and creative of a new development of the race" (Rauschenbusch, *Social Principles of Jesus*).

3. A Religion that Brings Happiness.

Jesus showed how the Old Testament law failed to produce happiness (Matthew 5:21-48); it forbade murder but did not condemn the anger which led to murder. In other words the old religion was defective in allowing a great deal of unhappiness to develop before it broke out in defiance of the law. Jesus, looking at the motives of the heart, saw that the way to remedy murder was to make the heart right. And not only that—if his plan would work, all those grievances which make human life so miserable would be done away and universal good-will would secure happiness for all.

Divorce in the ancient world was a serious cause of unhappiness for women and children. In Eastern lands to-day thousands of wives are put away by the method required in the Old Testament law. In Damascus the writer saw a Mohammedan woman who had lived many years with her husband seeking to recover about one hundred dollars which she had brought to her husband as a dowry. The husband had just divorced her without any process of law by simply telling her to go. When these cases multiply and a city becomes filled with these divorced women, and children are left without mothers, social conditions become indescribably bad. It was the unhappiness caused by it evidently that made Jesus oppose divorce.

For the old law of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" Jesus substituted the law of love. And instead of the idea that love should be limited to one's own neighbor or tribe Jesus suggested that there should

be no limits to their good-will, following the example of the Father in heaven who makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good.

The Jews in Jerusalem to-day hate the Arabs and recently in a riot between the two races a score of men were killed. Of course the Jews are not the only ones guilty of race hatred. But if Jesus' plan could be inaugurated, much of the unhappiness from which mankind now suffers could be eliminated. The Sermon on the Mount is the most noteworthy religious document ever issued, because it suggests the three motives to a life of good-will which are succeeding in civilized lands and are likely in the end to transform humanity.

4. Jesus' Substitute for the Ten Commandments.

Even the Ten Commandments were deemed external and formal by Jesus; when a certain rich young ruler (Luke 18: 18-25) declared that he had kept all the commandments, Jesus told him that was not sufficient. Keeping the Ten Commandments would not insure unselfishness and other essential virtues of the inner life. In place of them the Great Teacher suggested two that would include everything necessary—the love of God and neighbor. The story of the Good Samaritan showed clearly that in Jesus' vocabulary neighbor meant mankind without distinction of race, color, or wealth.

The same story shows that practical life reduces the love of God and neighbor to one, viz., the love of neighbor. The First Epistle of John (4: 20) states this clearly, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" So it turns out that all those motives to the good life

which Jesus used in the Sermon on the Mount may be fused into one—service to mankind. *As love to God is shown by service to man, so self-realization, “real self-advancement for the individual—the only kind of personal advancement that will harmonize with social welfare and that will win cordial acquiescence, and perhaps honor, of one’s fellows—is that which is won through service. . . . Survey the great names of civilization; and in proportion as those names are lastingly great and recognized to-day as truly worthy of honor, is it not because of their services to men?* Two main paths to greatness have been found hitherto—that of selfish domination and that of contribution to the common good. The path trodden by Cæsar and Constantine, Attila and Genghis Khan, Frederick and Napoleon, is certainly not to be denied; but neither is that followed by Saint Paul and Saint Francis, Galileo, and Newton, Pasteur and Lister, Michael Angelo and Beethoven, etc. Even among the men of arms those are held highest in honor by mankind with whom the cause bulked larger than the ambition—Charlemagne and Cromwell, Washington and Wellington, and their like” (Cooley, *The Aim of Jesus*).

And in connection with this thought of individual service Jesus implied, throughout the Sermon, the answer to the greatest problem of human society, *mutual service*. This is the teaching of the Golden Rule. Modern business houses are winning the approval of mankind and at the same time increasing their dividends by adopting the Golden Rule as a motto and actually practising the principle of mutual service.

5. Does the New Religion Make Life too Easy?

This talk of the love of God and man and of self-realization through loving service to others may seem false to the hard realities of life. Love may seem less stern than law, less exacting. The truth is that love is the more exacting, and offended love causes greater suffering than offended law. "There is a depth of sorrow, which can only be known to a soul that has loved the most perfect thing and beholds itself fallen." To lose the love of friend, to deeply grieve a mother's heart is worse than to break any external law. Judas committed an offense against love, and "he went and hanged himself."

The terrible thing about love in the new religion is that we may kill it. It is possible for us to break those strands that draw us upward toward God, and the hell that we then fall into is worse than any physical hell could be. The new religion is truer to life than the old, but its love when offended is more terrible than any law. Christianity has its hell. "The place has been painted as a place of fires. But when we contemplate that men come to it with the holiest flames in their nature quenched, we shall justly feel that it is rather a dreary waste of ash and cinder, strewn with snow—some ribbed and frosted Arctic zone, silent in death, for there is no life there because there is no love, and no love because men in rejecting or abusing her have slain their own power ever again to feel her presence."

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Give a reason for the universal appeal of Jesus.
2. What was his supreme gift to mankind? Quote Tennyson.
3. Give two or more examples from the Sermon on the Mount of Jesus' emphasis on motives rather than outward acts.

4. What did Jesus make the centre of his religion? Best modern word for it?
5. What has Jesus to say on making the most of one's self?
6. Contrast our ordinary view of the worth of human life with that of Jesus.
7. Illustrate the way in which Jesus' religion produced happiness.
8. Jesus' substitute for the Ten Commandments.

Oral Discussion

1. What evidence have we that there is "a path to heaven from every clime"?
2. Why did Jesus lay stress on the old law although he was superseding it?
3. What is the advantage of describing religion in terms of personal friendship with God?
4. Give examples of recent attempts on the part of large business concerns to put the Golden Rule into practice.

Special Assignments

1. Read Mozoomdar's *Oriental Christ* and write a report on it for the class.
2. What is the difference between divorce in the Christian and Mohammedan religions?
3. Describe Tissot's *The Prodigal's Return*, and show the contrast in thought between it and Michael Angelo's *Moses*.

CHAPTER XI

A NEW MEANING IN PRAYER

Mark 1:35; 6:46; 7:34; 9:29; 11:24, 25; 12:40; 13:33; 14:35. Matthew 6:9-13. I Thessalonians 5:17, 18.

I. A Secret Source of Strength.

In the prelude to Lohengrin one of the strains of music is repeated again and again and the listener learns to wait for its recurrence. It is what gives interest and power to the composition. So in the lives of great men there are certain notes of power that distinguish them from others. A hidden source of power in the life of Jesus is revealed by incidental references in the Gospel of Mark. A dozen times at least Mark says this or an equivalent: "Then early in the morning, long before daylight, he got up and went away out to a lonely spot. He was praying there when Simon and his companions hunted him out and discovered him" (1:35, 36). One explanation, then, of Jesus' strength and calmness and final victory was his habit of prayer. One Gospel records that when he prayed heaven opened and God talked with him (Luke 3:21, 22). Without regard to place or time or special attitude Jesus was in the habit of "lifting his eyes to heaven" (Mark 7:34) and thus gained reinforcement of power.

This was really a hidden source of strength. The casual reader of Mark would not notice that prayer had been mentioned. Jesus rarely spoke of it or recommended it to others. He objected when any one made a show of prayer, preferring that it should be done in

secret. His petitions were usually sentence prayers, and he evidently thought that they should not be long (Mark 12:40) and that they should not be talked about.

2. Jesus Did Not Originate Prayer.

Jesus' great accomplishment with respect to prayer was to make it spiritual. Prayer is as old as mankind. As Thomas Carlyle said, it is "the native and deepest impulse of the soul of man." We have Egyptian, Babylonian, Hebrew, and Greek prayers, long antedating the time of Christ. Some of the best of these ancient petitions are found in Babylonia. For example, Nebuchadrezzar prayed to his god Marduk as follows:

O Eternal Prince ! Lord of all being !
As for the king whom thou lovest, and
Whose name thou hast proclaimed
As was pleasing to thee,
Do thou lead aright his life,
Guide him in a straight path.

According to thy grace, O Lord,
Which thou dost bestow on all people,
Cause me to love thy supreme dominion,
And create in my heart
The worship of thy godhead,
And grant whatever is pleasing to thee,
Because thou hast fashioned my life.

Almost all ancient prayers have two faults: they are supplications for physical blessings and they are magical. The repetitions of sacred formulas, oftentimes by a hired priest, were thought to bring about the desired answer, as the nickel in the slot brings results. Jesus did for prayer what he did for religion in general, he took the unreality out of it and made it a personal relation with God, a genuine communion with him.

3. A Criticism of Jewish Prayers.

The parable in Luke 18: 9-14 is an example of Jesus' thought about the matter. He told this story to certain persons who were sure of their own goodness and looked down on everybody else. Two men were praying in the temple. One, a Pharisee, thanked God that he was not like the common run of men; the other, a tax-gatherer, did not have confidence enough to lift his eyes to heaven, but beating on his breast said, "O God, have mercy on me for my sins." The tax-gatherer rather than the proud man was acceptable to God. Thus Jesus showed one necessary attitude, the humble reaching up of the heart toward heaven with a feeling of dependence and a sense of unworthiness. As George MacDonald once wrote:

"My soul leans toward him; stretches out its arms,
And waits expectant. Speak to me, my God;
And let me know the living Father cares
For me, even me; for this one of his children."

Long, unreal prayers (Mark 12:40), such as we often hear in church to-day, formal mumbled petitions of which the modern synagogue is too often guilty, the prayer-wheels of the Buddhists, and the counting of beads by the Romanists are condemned by the spirit of Jesus.

True prayer is most often a private, secret thing, a transaction between the soul and God. It is often intense, the highest energy of which the soul is capable. Words may not be spoken, but the contemplation of lofty thought, the concentration of the mind on high purposes, the communion with the Infinite is a task that calls out the best in man. In solitary struggle we learn by heart what in public we may calmly repeat. In prayer in Gethsemane Jesus learned to say, "Father

forgive them, for they know not what they do." This private prayer was carried on in the most public places by the Master (Mark 6:41 and 7:34). Robert Nichols suggests that God may be met in the most unlikely places by those who understand.

"There is somewhere a Secret Garden, which none hath seen
In a place apart
But amid the bramble-bound world, the thicket, the screen
To the understanding of heart."

4. The Community Prayer.

It was achievement enough for any of the world's great men to formulate a prayer which for nineteen hundred years should be used in all civilized countries. His social prayer, or disciples' prayer, the favorite form of which is found in Matthew 6:9-13, is so universal that one who could not repeat it in some language might be called illiterate. Jesus' disciples needed instruction in prayer (Luke 11:1), so he gave them this form, parts of which were in use in the synagogues of his day. One part, however, was new, and that the most difficult part for honest men to use in praying:

Forgive us our debts
As we have forgiven our debtors.

This remarkable couplet makes it incumbent on those who use the Lord's Prayer to forgive their enemies before they pray. The words "Our Father" at the beginning of the prayer show that it was meant for a community or group and its unifying value has been very great. Protestants, Greeks, and Roman Catholics, French, Germans, English, Russians, and Americans have in one assembly, with a real sense of brotherhood, repeated together this prayer.

"So many roads lead up to God
'Twere strange if any soul should miss them all."

No one should seek occasion to deny that each race in its own way may find God as he is revealed "in what he has made" (Acts 17:27 and Romans 1:20), but it is a joy to see many different races and religions unite at one time and place in a common prayer. An eyewitness of the opening of the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 says that the emotions of the participants were almost overpowering when men and women of ten religions and representatives of many tribes, kindreds, and tongues, having sung "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," were led by Cardinal Gibbons, without previous plan or intention, in repeating together:

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done
On earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.

Jesus did much for the success of this prayer by giving it a rhythmical form and a simplicity of structure very easy to remember. It is built of Hebrew poetical parallelisms which make up a lyric poem of two stanzas with five lines in each stanza. The first stanza is for the community, a prayer for the coming of the kingdom; the second is for the individual, a prayer for daily help, and forgiveness, and leadership that shall keep us out of danger.

5. A Teaching of Jesus that Makes the Christian Idea of Prayer Reasonable.

A dramatic presentation of this teaching of Jesus which makes prayer so natural is found in Mark 4:35-41. One evening, as Jesus was crossing the sea in a boat with his disciples, a heavy squall of wind overtook them and the waves splashed into the boat, so that it was filling with water and seemed likely to sink. The wind was so violent that the disciples felt helpless. Jesus had fallen asleep on the seat in the stern, and so tired was he after the work of the day that neither the tossing of the boat, the roaring of the wind, nor the shouting of the men awakened him. In their alarm the men aroused Jesus, saying fretfully, "Teacher, are we to drown, for all you care?" Then Jesus said to the wind and the waves, "Peace, be still," and to the disciples he said, "Why are you afraid like this? Have you no faith yet?"

Faith was the secret of his peace and his power, and it explained the naturalness and frequency of his prayers. It was the *sense of God's presence and surrender of self to God with perfect trust*. Why should he or the disciples be troubled? The work was God's, they were God's; God would not let anything happen that would injure them or defeat his great purpose. While we cannot explain the physical happenings, we do know that the decisive thing was Jesus' faith.

This was Jesus' great gift to mankind: God is present in flower, bird, little child, and in every event, great or small. We may pray to the ever-present and all-powerful and loving Father at any time, in any place. Jesus has bequeathed to us the sure belief that God is good, and right, and just. On this sense of God's presence and justice millions of men have based their

lives and made their great decisions. Without it the career of Lincoln and many of his great words, such as the following, would have been impossible: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

6. Prayer and Work.

The practical nature of Jesus' religion is shown by his emphasis on human co-operation in prayer. When he sought God's help in healing he asked the sick person to do his part. In the first incident of the sort which Mark reports (3:1-5), Jesus said to the man with a withered hand, "Rise and come forward . . . stretch forth your hand." When he fed the five thousand people (Mark 6:38), he let the folks furnish what food they had on hand. If one prays for forgiveness, he must do his part by forgiving others (Mark 11:25). Prayer, then, is not simply getting things from God, but entering into a frame of mind where one can work with God.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Give evidences that Jesus made practical use of prayer.
2. What part has prayer played in the history of mankind?
3. Tell the story of the Pharisee and tax-gatherer who prayed in the temple. What was Jesus' criticism?
4. Give an example of the social value of the Lord's Prayer.
5. Tell the story of the calming of the storm in Mark 4:35-41.
6. Give a definition of faith.
7. Show from examples that Jesus believed that men had something to do in prayer.
8. Give a definition of prayer.

Oral Discussion

1. Do men need to use any special form when they pray?
2. What forms have proved helpful to many?
3. Do we, like ancient peoples, as the Egyptians, pray too much for physical blessings?
4. Explain how prayer may become a task.
5. Why does the prayer-wheel of India fail to be true prayer?

Special Assignments

1. Quote Tennyson's estimate of prayer near the end of his poem entitled *Morte D'Arthur*.
2. Read the chapter on "The Naturalness of Prayer" in Harry Emerson Fosdick's *The Meaning of Prayer*, and give examples of the universality of prayer.
3. Study Hofmann's painting, *Christ in Gethsemane*, and note in his face of Christ signs of mental effort. Write a description of this remarkable picture. See Bailey, *The Gospel in Art*, 314.

CHAPTER XII

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TOWARD MONEY

Mark 10:17-27; Matthew 6:25-34; Luke 16:19-31;
Philippians 3:7, 8.

I. An Object-lesson.

After Jesus had left Galilee for the last time and was passing through Perea on his way to Jerusalem, there appeared in the group that followed him a rich young man who was evidently greatly attracted by the Master. In his hearing Jesus told the Parable of the Rich Man and His Barns (Luke 12:16-31), closing with the words, "Thou foolish one, this night shall thy soul be required of thee." Rauschenbusch says concerning this (*Social Principles of Jesus*, 118): "To Jesus the fat farmer was a tragic comedy. In the first place, an unseen hand was waiting to snuff out his candle. To plan life as if it consisted in an abundance of material wealth is something of miscalculation in a world where death is part of the scheme of things. In the second place, Jesus saw no higher purpose in the man's aim and outlook to redeem his acquisitiveness. The man was a sublimated chipmunk, gloating over bushels of pignuts."

Now the rich young man was deeply moved by the fate of the wealthy landowner as pictured in this parable and earnestly asked Jesus about his own life. Hofmann's *Christ and the Rich Young Man* contributes much to our appreciation of the scene. Jesus and the young man are standing face to face, while in the

background are two poor people, one of them helpless with disease. Jesus is offering an opportunity of a career in which the young man could win eternal life by giving up luxury and serving the poor and oppressed. The face of the young man shows refinement; his whole bearing is that of one who has conscientiously kept those commandments which his religion required. His rich garments are attractive. It is no wonder that Jesus "loved him" and saw in him one who could become a valuable leader. Perhaps in him the world lost another Paul.

Here, also, is an example of what Jesus meant by the "deceitfulness of riches." The youth was irresolute but finally decided against Jesus. He had obeyed the Law, and he would continue in the same path of superficial goodness, but to give up his inherited wealth, abandon the comforts of his home, and follow Jesus along the path of self-denial was too big a thing. Jesus turned on the young man a gaze that searched his very soul, according to Hofmann's interpretation.

2. A Modern Parallel.

Professor Francis G. Peabody of Harvard has drawn a parallel to the rich young man. "It is a situation familiar in modern life. A young man, well born and well bred, winsome and gallant, is withheld from the effective use of his life by the weight of his possessions. If he could only forget that he was rich and give himself to strenuous work he might do gallant service. If some dramatic summons, like that of an actual war, is heard by him, the follies of his luxury and self-indulgence drop away from him, and he becomes the most enduring and daring of soldiers. Meantime, however, here he is, with hardly a fair chance for a useful life,

turning play into work, and sinking into a false and foolish estimate of life and happiness. What hope is there for such a young man except through some radical change, curative though cruel, like the surgeon's knife? It was thus that Jesus, loving the young ruler, demanded much of him; and one can imagine the loving pity with which Jesus, when the young man shrank from the only operation which could save him, looked around about and saith unto his disciples, 'How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God.'"

3. The Prominence of Money in the Teachings of Jesus.

John Ruskin said: "Have you observed that all Christ's main teachings, by direct order, by earnest parable, and by his own permanent emotion, regard the use and the misuse of *money*? We might have thought, if we had been asked what a divine teacher was most likely to teach, that he would have left inferior persons to give directions about money; and himself spoken only concerning faith and love, and the discipline of the passions, and the guilt of the crimes of soul against soul. But not so. . . . The two most intense of all the parables; the two which lead the rest in love and terror (that of the Prodigal and Dives) relate, both of them, to management of riches. The practical order given to the only seeker of advice of whom it is recorded that Christ 'loved him' is briefly about his property, 'Sell that thou hast.'"

The reason for this emphasis on money is because the love of it is the root of all evil. Jesus knew life, because he had spent almost all his years as a business man. His occupation as a carpenter threw him inti-

mately into the company of laboring men. But his ability and the incidental references to building (Luke 14:30, etc.) and many of his parables lead us to believe that he was a master builder. He had seen the selfishness and arrogance of the rich as well as the weakness of the poor. It was money that explained more than any other one thing the bad conditions of life about him.

We too know that this instinct of possession is less subject to control even than that of sex. It was a true insight on the part of Jesus that made him pronounce forgiveness on the adulteress and condemnation on Dives. The passion for wealth eats up all the energies, once it gets the best of a man. He values people according to the amount of money they have. When the love of money dominates society, marriages are arranged for it, politics run for it, and wars are begun for it. Creative, artistic, and intellectual impulses are shouldered aside, fall asleep, or die of inanition. Property is intended to secure freedom of action and self-development; but, in fact, it often chains men and clips their wings. (See Rauschenbusch's chapter on "Property and the Common Good" in his *The Social Principles of Jesus*.)

4. Luke's Emphasis on the Sympathy of Jesus for the Poor.

Jesus was so great a personality that no one writer could see all his qualities at once. Mark, Matthew, and Luke each describes something that impressed him most. Mark, under the influence of the preaching of Peter, gives us a vivid account of the deeds—wonderful deeds—of Jesus. Matthew puts to the front the teachings of the Master. Luke is filled with descriptions of

Jesus' sympathy for the poor. He pictures the birth of Christ in a *manger*, the sacrifice of two young pigeons by his parents, which was the offering of the poor; in Jesus' first sermon it is said that he came to preach the gospel to the poor (4:16-20); all property is to be given up if one is to be an apostle of Christ (14:33); several of the parables deal with the poor (14:16; 16:19).

It is interesting to note that in his report of the Sermon on the Mount Luke says, "Blessed are ye poor," where Matthew has, "Blessed are the poor in spirit"; "Blessed are ye that hunger now," omitting "after righteousness"; to Matthew's injunction, "Love your enemies," Luke adds the significant words "and lend without expecting any return" (6:35). Luke writes, "Woe to the rich" (6:24).

5. Answer to Criticisms of Jesus' Position.

Two criticisms of Jesus have been made at this point. One, that he advised against wealth on the mistaken ground that the world was soon coming to an end (see Mark 13); the other, that he underestimated the importance of capital. It has been thought that Jesus, along with the other leaders of his generation, did not foresee the need of capital to care for the complex industrial, educational, and benevolent enterprises that would in the distant future become an important part of the growing Kingdom of God.

But we have many sayings and parables from him that do apply to an advanced society. His principles are helping rich and poor co-operate and enabling men to use accumulated wealth and collective intelligence in such a way that the unpleasant feeling of inferiority and inequality arises less and less in the minds of labor.

Jesus did not condemn the possession of wealth and private property. On the other hand he assumed that it would continue (Luke 16: 10-12). It is not by giving up property (except in the case of the apostles) that a man pleases God, but by using property in the right way. Also he believed in the inequality of the amount of property possessed by different men. The Parable of the Talents illustrates that point (Matthew 25: 14-30).

Nowhere did Jesus condemn a man for being happy with his money. He went to feasts given by well-to-do people. He praised a woman at Bethany for her lavish gift of ointment (Mark 14: 3-9). "Music, feasts, splendors, flowers, these were not vanities with him to be avoided" (Matthew 22: 1-14; 25: 1-13). The vast majority of the teachings of Jesus, including all of the Sermon on the Mount and nearly all of the parables, bear testimony against the charge that Jesus believed that the world was soon going to end. The Parable of the Mustard Seed predicts that the Kingdom will fill the earth. The Beatitudes and the New Law in Matthew, chapters five to seven, are given evidently for a world that is going to continue, not for one that is soon to end.

It was because money was so abused that he gave the warning. He knew that from childhood we are all "besieged with every inducement to make the accumulation of material goods the chief object of desire." He saw on every hand selfish and indolent indulgence on the part of the rich. He condemned any one who did not work—produce something for the benefit of society, the servant (Matthew 25: 30) as well as Dives (Luke 16: 23). His startling words in Matthew 6: 19-21, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth," are

limited by the parallel words, "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Riches stored up enable one to gratify selfish desires, and he saw that the practice of this by the wealthy was almost universal. So he threw out this warning against laying up treasures in strong language, but if one could lay up treasures in heaven and also accumulate the means of giving suppers to the poor and caring for injured travellers (Luke 10:35), there was no objection to that. We know that wealth interferes seriously with friendships. The higher scale of living adopted by one who has acquired money makes it impossible for his old friend to continue friendly. Pride creeps in when the rich man receives the adulations of subordinates and admirers and he loses that sense of dependence on God and human friends which is essential to that gratitude which every spiritual man must have.

Wealth is still the chief enemy of genuine spiritual life. When a man gains riches there comes the sense of power to inflict social or financial punishment on those who oppose him. This is done everywhere, and widespread ruin of character and happiness ensues. Poor people do not feel at home with the rich and the sense of brotherhood is broken up. To gain this means of power over others men sacrifice honor and friends. It shows ignorance of human society in every age to say that Jesus spoke too seriously of the dangers of wealth.

We who seek to apply Jesus' teachings to our own lives should remember that this choicest life that was ever lived had a humble origin and was content with a humble occupation. He was a working man, or a master workman on a small scale, and spent his life in one little city. He was a friend of the common man. If he ever acquired a competence for himself and his mother,

it was by hard labor. Lincoln, who has been called the best man that ever lived, next to Jesus Christ, was for a long time a common workman. Is that not the best environment for great and good men to grow in?

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Tell the Parable of the Rich Man and His Barns, Luke 12: 16-31.
2. Give Rauschenbusch's interpretation of it as a "tragic comedy."
3. What does Hofmann's painting, *Christ and the Rich Young Man* contribute to our understanding of the situation?
4. What do modern young men need who are weighted down by their wealth?
5. Why did Jesus so often speak of money?
6. Which gospel gives largest attention to the poor? State evidence.
7. What two criticisms of Jesus' idea of wealth have been made?
8. Give examples to show that Jesus did not condemn private property or inequality of the amount of property.
9. How do you know that Jesus believed in happiness?

Oral Discussion

1. Was Ruskin correct when he said that all Christ's main teachings are concerned with money?
2. Are wars begun for money? Some reasons for and against the suggestion.
3. Why is it natural that the "master iniquities of our time" should be connected with money-making? See Ross in Rauschenbusch, *Social Principles of Jesus*, p. 126.
4. Meaning of the phrase "deceitfulness of riches."
5. Why has the church not adopted Jesus' attitude toward riches?
6. Why do the labor-unions condemn our churches?

Special Assignments

1. Report on the differences between Luke on the one hand, and Matthew and Mark on the other, respecting the discussion of money.
2. Look up Paul's letters to find his references to money? Why so few?
3. Write an abstract of Rauschenbusch, *Social Principles of Jesus*, 124-128.

CHAPTER XIII

JESUS AND THE RACE PROBLEM

Mark 7: 24-30; Luke 7: 1-10; Romans 2: 6-29; Colossians 3: 11.

I. Lessons from a Samaritan and a Zulu.

A bright lawyer among the Jews one day asked Jesus this question to test his ability, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus replied, "What is written in the law?" When the man replied that love to God and neighbor is required, Jesus told him to obey that and he would have eternal life. But the lawyer wishing to quibble asked Jesus what he meant by neighbor. Jesus thought of a way to give a sharp rebuke which was well deserved by telling the following story, which, next to the Prodigal Son, is the most famous in the world. Read Luke 10: 30-37, in which Jesus showed the lawyer how a Samaritan proved himself a neighbor to a wounded Jew while a Jewish priest and a Jewish Levite left the wounded man in the gutter.

An officer of the British Army with his company of soldiers was on duty in South Africa watching a hostile Zulu tribe. One day a Zulu came toward the British camp carrying a flag of truce. By mistake he was shot by a British soldier. Immediately the officer in charge walked toward the Zulu village unarmed and offered himself to the chief, saying, "One of my soldiers has shot a Zulu by mistake. You may do with me what you will." The Zulu chief looked at him for a moment and said, "You are a man. We also are men. You have ex-

plained, and we bear no grudge. You shall return safely to your camp." Thus the Samaritan and the Zulu have taught us the lesson we need to learn that no race has a monopoly of nobility.

2. Jesus' One Trip among Foreigners.

Only once did Jesus go outside the borders of his own little country. Mark records that he went into the region of Tyre in Phoenicia. It would seem that he wished his whereabouts to be unknown until the opposition to him in Galilee had quieted down.

Here a scene took place which is an example of Jesus' purpose to give his whole time to the Jewish people. A Greek woman asked him to cast a demon out of her daughter. His strange reply was, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs," meaning that his mission was to the Jews and not to the Gentiles. It is said that the word "dogs" is not as harsh as it seems, for it means "little dogs." But the woman was quick-witted and answered, "But the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs." Her reply was so apt and the woman was so anxious that Jesus could not resist his inclination to help her, so he healed her daughter. Matthew adds to the story the following remark of Jesus, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (15: 24).

3. The Wisdom of Jesus' Method.

We cannot know what was in Jesus' mind concerning this matter, except the implication in Mark 7: 27 that it was important first of all to give the Gospel message to the Jews. This is supported by Matthew 15: 24. But apart from any evidence from Jesus himself there are two excellent arguments in favor of his method. First,

it was necessary to train a group of his own people so thoroughly that they could carry on Christianity after the Crucifixion. And the event justified his method. For it was Jews that began Christianity, and it is highly probable that Christianity would never have been started if Jesus had scattered his efforts among many nations.

Second, there is another important consideration which shows that his method was the only sound one. Each race, especially when that race has for centuries maintained a national existence in one country, is different from all others in many ways and therefore has its own mission to perform in the world. It differs in inheritance, history, institutions, philosophy, religion, literature, and art. Such a nation, great or small, has something to contribute to the progress of mankind, otherwise it would not have survived in the struggle for existence. During the Great War James Bryce called attention to the importance of preserving the independence of small nations, of which Belgium was an example, because, like ancient Greece, they might have some wonderful benefit to confer on mankind. Jesus was right from every point of view in concentrating his efforts on the Jews. It is generally conceded that they were best fitted religiously and morally to prepare the way for Christianity, and furnish the soil in which it might rapidly grow.

4. Evidences that Christianity Was for All Races.

While Jesus' plan of limiting his work to his own race was necessary, yet there are many suggestions in the Gospels and in Paul's letters that his teachings and his personal attitude were favorable to a universal religion.

Paul was the first man to write extensively about

Jesus, and in one of his first letters he says that God called him for the furtherance of Jesus' cause to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles (Galatians 1:15, 16). A little later he declared that in Christianity there was neither Greek nor Jew, barbarian or Scythian, slave nor freeman—all were equal before God (Colossians 3:11). Again he clearly states that Christ destroyed the barrier which kept the races apart (Colossians 3:11). Paul was a thoroughgoing Jew and the greatest interpreter that Jesus ever had; it is not likely that he made a mistake when he said that Jesus came to all the world and not to his own race alone.

The best evidence of the breadth of Jesus is found in the principles which he taught. Not one of them has a racial limitation. In the Sermon on the Mount which contains most of his fundamental teachings there is a universal note in every paragraph. If you add to that the parables of the Leaven, Mustard Seed, and Good Samaritan (see Matthew 13 and Luke 10) you have clear testimony that his spirit and his teachings were as broad as mankind.

Matthew's Gospel, which is supposed to be the most Jewish of all says, "Go, and make disciples of all nations" (28:19). Luke, in reporting the birth of Jesus, declares that the good tidings of great joy were meant for all people (2:10). In Acts 10:34, 35 we read, "Peter opened his mouth and said, 'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.'" All through the New Testament the Roman centurions are spoken of with respect, and in one case Jesus said that the Roman had faith superior to that of any Jew that he had known.

It is therefore clear that those who charge that Jesus intended his Gospel for the Jews are mistaken, for

those who knew Jesus best proceeded to preach the gospel to Romans, Ethiopians, Greeks, and within twenty years after his death large churches had been built in his name in Macedonia, Greece, Italy. These churches had many non-Jews in their membership. While his method was to establish his religion on a firm basis among the Jews, who were the best fitted of all races to receive the new religion, yet Jesus must have known that by its own inner propulsion Christianity was bound to go out into all the world. That such a religion should originate among the Jews and win the world is clearly taught in Isaiah 42:1-9, and in other parts of the same book. It is impossible to conceive that Jesus had not caught this vision. So there rises before our minds the image of our great Master, who not only had the teachings that would save the world, but had the wisdom to adopt the right method of starting those teachings on their universal saving mission.

5. What Jesus Has Accomplished toward the Settlement of the Race Problem.

He has inspired men like Paul and Barnabas to go into every nation and win individuals to the Christ ideal. Augustine in North Africa, Columba in Ireland, Boniface in England, Booker T. Washington at Tuskegee Institute, Ebena in Japan, Loyola in Spain—all have been converted to the Christian programme and with sincerity and success have given their lives to the promotion of Christianity. This proves that race is no barrier to our religion and that individuals are essentially the same in any nation.

“But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho they come from the ends of the earth.”

The first task has been the winning of individuals and groups of individuals in every nation. These already form a world society permeated by the spirit of justice, sympathy, and good-will. In this way race divisions have already in principle been transcended. The ideal of the Kingdom of God is cherished by multitudes in every race. This spiritual influence toward the unity of mankind is strengthened by commerce, by art, and by science, which are universal.

6. An Objection.

As men of different races have come into contact in the same city, even Christians have found it difficult to love all men, as one loves father or brother. But that is not what Christ meant by love. The word that Jesus used signifies "good-will," or "willingness to help." In this sense it is easy to love all in our midst, because no Christian would care to bear ill-will toward any group. Moreover, our task is to teach that God loves them, not that we like them.

God loves them, and we should have good-will toward them, not for what they are now, but for what they may become. Our love of other races is not to be founded on an absurd and impossible effort to control our instinctive feelings but on the humanity in them with its divine possibilities.

7. Illustrations of the Value of Preserving Racial Differences.

As differences among individuals make a more interesting and successful family, State, and nation, so differences in race will be a factor in producing a more wonderful world. It is differences within the whole that make the harmony so effective in music. So in

civilization the nations and races should preserve their distinctive peculiarities, for the ideal world which Christ has inspired Christians to build is a co-operative achievement. As our present civilization has been built up by English, French, Americans, Germans, Russians, Italians, and all the others, not by suppressing their differences but by contributing to the whole just those peculiar racial characteristics, so the perfect Christian civilization is to be built by continuing the same plan of diversity in unity.

Examples of the value of this co-operation are on every hand. Charles Stelzle, who is contributing so much to the improvement in American social conditions, especially in New York, is of German parentage. Edward A. Steiner, brilliant author of *From Alien to Citizen* and of many other books that have powerfully influenced public opinion in behalf of immigrants was born in Vienna, Austria. Mary Antin, author of *The Promised Land*, was born in Polotzk, Russia. To Hungary Columbia University is indebted for Michael Pupin, professor of electromechanics. "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of" the multitude from alien races that have helped build America.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Tell the story of the Good Samaritan.
2. Describe Jesus' experience with a foreigner during the only trip that he ever took outside of his own country.
3. Why was Jesus justified in spending his whole life with the Jewish people?
4. Name some suggestions in the Gospels and in Paul's letters to show that Christ meant his religion to be universal.
5. What principle is involved in the story of the Good Samaritan which would do away with the barriers between the races?

6. Give an instance in which Jesus praised a Roman above any Jew that he had known.
7. Name three or more men of different races who have become equally earnest promoters of Christianity.
8. In what sense is the word "love" used when we are urged to love men of a different race?
9. Give examples in American life of the value of preserving racial differences.
10. Would Jesus condemn our present immigration laws?

Oral Discussion

1. Show how the Greek woman secured the healing of her daughter by her quick wit.
2. Did Jesus succeed in training the Jews so that they could start Christianity?
3. Why is it important to preserve the independence of small nations?
4. What is the meaning of the Parable of the Mustard Seed?

Special Assignments

1. Read Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery*, and give a brief report to the class.
2. Study Acts 10 and state whether Peter held the same view as Paul concerning the application of the Gospel to different races.
3. Write an essay on a Christian's attitude to the race problem, referring to Oldham's *Christianity and the Race Problem*.

CHAPTER XIV

THINGS THAT MAKE FOR HAPPINESS

Matthew 7; Luke 6:37-49; Luke 7:36-50.

i. The Refuge and Strength of the Ages.

As one reads the Sermon on the Mount, from that description of the perfect man in the Beatitudes to the picture of the House on the Rock, there rises up before the mind the figure of earth's greatest character, who built into his own life the things which he taught. When he said, "Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest," people began to go to him at once, and down through the ages that procession of burdened souls has wended its way toward him, and not one has gone in vain. Mrs. Humphry Ward once asked Walter Pater, at a reception in his little white cottage at Oxford, "Do you not think that the church exalts Christ too much?" He replied, "How can you deny the greatness and worth of one who could say 'Come unto me . . . and I will give you rest,' and then keep his promise to all the millions who have gone to him."

The Buddha did not say, "Come unto me," but he declared in the *Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness*, Buddhism's Sermon on the Mount, that peace would follow in the footsteps of the one who recognized the existence of suffering, its causes, its remedy, and its cessation, and entered upon the eightfold path of morality. But there was no personal help in that, no Saviour, no Father in heaven.

Three hundred years before Christ, Krishna, one of the gods of Hinduism, said, as reported in the Gita, Hinduism's New Testament, "Forsaking all duties, come to me as your sole refuge. I will release you from all sins. Be not grieved." But this was said only to one who was ready to abandon action and become a monk. That religion, beautiful at its best, proved to be unsocial and ineffective in human society. In all nations men have reached up weary hands toward heaven, and here and there, apart from Christianity, individuals have found help and developed lofty characters, but Christ's way alone has proved practical for the millions of mankind, and it alone has produced a civilization in which individuals find a helpful environment for the highest spiritual attainment.

2. Concerning Harsh Judgments.

That perfect character which is outlined for us in the Beatitudes becomes loving and persuasive in the seventh chapter of Matthew. He would not judge others as the Pharisees were doing, because others have troubles and temptations of which even their friends cannot know. Moreover, when one judges another he shows his own lack of breadth. Jesus was a new kind of person in the world, broad in sympathy as well as good in character, lofty in attainment, yet without a bit of pride.

One day a critical young man was walking past a house newly built according to the colonial style of architecture. He was ignorant of architecture but that did not prevent his sense of superiority from finding expression, and he said to a companion "What a plain house to spend so much money on; the owner has no taste." He showed his own crude preference for a vulgar style of beauty. So it is in all our judging. It re-

veals what we are. Judge not, that you may not be judged yourselves. The censorious teacher, the fault-finding woman, the harsh husband stand condemned in the light of this saying.

3. At the House of Simon.

The story of the banquet in the house of Simon (Luke 7:36-50) is a good example of Jesus' condemnation of pride. A wealthy Pharisee had invited Jesus to dinner. His pride and high esteem of himself had kept him from treating Jesus with the ordinary courtesy due a guest. He had not had water poured on his feet, nor given him the kiss of greeting, nor furnished any oil for his head. Unexpectedly a woman of the street stepped into the banquet-room. She stood at the feet of Jesus and wept tears of repentance while she wiped his feet with the hair of her head.

Simon said to himself, "If Jesus is what he claims to be, he will recognize what kind of a woman this is and refuse to have anything to do with her." But Jesus saw that Simon's pride was much worse than the woman's sin, and he told him the story of two men. One owed his creditor fifty pounds and the other five but neither was able to pay. He freely forgave them both. "Which of the two men," said Jesus, "will love the creditor most? The one who had most forgiven." Jesus then told Simon that this woman was better than he.

There is a painting by Rubens called *Christ in the House of Simon* which shows this scene most impressively. Simon surrounded by his wealthy Jewish friends draws back in horror when he sees the woman fall at Jesus' feet. The proud Pharisee looks at Jesus in scorn while Jesus looks Simon in the eye and reproves him for his pride and hardness of heart.

4. The Golden Rule in Three Religions.

Jesus' rule of life in Matthew 7:12, "Whatever ye would like men to do to you, do just the same to them," is another of those revolutionary sayings that have made Christianity so attractive in the world. It simply means that one should treat others as he thinks he himself ought to be treated if he were in the other man's place. It is an appeal for fair treatment for all, and would tend to do away with the feeling in society that one was trying to get an advantage over another.

In China two teachers appeared about six hundred years before Christ who gave rules of conduct very like this. Lao-tze said, "Recompense injury with kindness. To those who are good to me I am good and to those who are not good to me, I am also good. And thus all get to be good."

Confucius' golden rule was not as lofty as this in thought. It ran as follows, "Recompense injury with justice, and recompense kindness with kindness." This has often been called the "silver rule" of Confucius. It is inferior to both the others because of its negative character. While Lao-tze, the founder of Taoism, gave a rule very like that of Jesus yet he lacked the belief in a personal God. It was this belief that gave added significance to the statement of Jesus (Matthew 5:38-48).

5. The Two Ways.

Another teaching of Jesus that has led many people to write poems and paint pictures is that the way to success is narrow, hard to find, and hard to travel (Matthew 7:13, 14). The very fact that the teaching seems so difficult has led people to illustrate it and make

it clear to life's beginners. Why should it be so hard to get the best things? Why do white lilies grow out of the black mud? Why did Alice Freeman Palmer have to suffer deprivations and hardship in order to secure an education? Abraham Mitrie Rihbany writes of his early experiences: "I was taken out of school at the age of nine and introduced to manual labor. . . . My wage was two pennies a day, and the hours of labor from dawn until dusk. . . . When I think of the foreman who ruled over us in those days, the month I spent under him as a cocoon-picker rises in my mind as a harrowing memory." It has been so with many of the good and great of earth. They have found it hard to follow the path that leads to heaven.

"But always fronting onward toward the light,
Always and always facing toward the right,
Robbed, starved, defeated, fallen, wide astray—
On with what strength I have,
Back to the way!"

The narrow path has proved best. It is the path of service. Moses trod it and so did Jesus. What a long line of noble men and women have climbed that steep path! Paul, Jerome, Augustine, Saint Martin, Saint Clotilde, Bertha, Luther, Saint Francis, Saint Bernard, Pasteur, Father Damien, Edith Cavell, and all the rest. The hard way must be best.

"Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent."

6. Heart's Treasures.

We may combine two sayings of the Master and thereby gain a new insight: "By their fruits ye shall know them" and "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." The latter may better be translated "heav-

enly treasures." What we store up in our minds will surely come out in our thoughts and speech. "What we are thinking we shall soon be doing."

"As our dreams are so are we;
We shape in thought, what soon we shape in deed;
And what we daily hold within, we grow to be;
Our visions are ourselves."

That was good advice once given by some one, and it has been repeated a thousand times: "Every day read a good poem, look at a beautiful picture, and listen to inspiring music." Verses learned in youth come back to bless us in later years. These heavenly treasures may not pay good dividends on Wall Street, but their worth in producing character is beyond value. Jesus said, the word is the overflow of the heart. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34 and Luke 6:45). What a heart, then, his words reveal! . . . His words caught the attention and lived in the memory; they revealed such a nature; they were so living and unforgettable!

This wonderful Sermon on the Mount closes with two pictures, one of the House on the Rock and the other of the House on the Sand (7:24-27). It shows that Jesus was seeking by all his teachings to build permanent lives, lives that would stand the worst storms. When all the teachings of the Master are gathered together, and his great spiritual discoveries are compared with those of the world's great men, he stands out supreme for seven reasons that have been enumerated by President King in his *Ethics of Jesus* (pp. 198-200): He gave *unity* to our life by his idea of love as fulfilling all law; *deeper meaning* to the teachings which he has in common with other religions by making the moral law become the will of the Father in heaven;

created a *new realm of morality* by his list of virtues that do not involve fighting against any interests of mankind; a *new spirit to morality* by making it the joyful obedience of a child to the Father; set religion *free from beliefs* that would be outgrown; gave *himself as the embodiment* of all that he taught; and had the power peculiar to himself of making *effective his teaching in the lives of men*.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. How could Jesus say, "Come unto me and I will give you rest"?
2. Compare the Buddha with Jesus in this respect.
3. What social test does Christianity stand better than Hinduism?
4. Think of some person of your acquaintance who is accustomed to judge others harshly and name two evident failings involved.
5. Tell the story of the banquet in the house of Simon.
6. What harm does pride like that of Simon do in the world?
7. Give the Golden Rule in three religions.
8. What did Jesus mean by the narrow way that leads to success?
9. Explain what Jesus meant by "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

Oral Discussion

1. What is the message of the story of the House on the Rock and the House on the Sand?
2. In what respect was Jesus' golden rule superior to that of Confucius?
3. What does the Taoist's golden rule lack?
4. How may the emotional appeal of a religious service or music or drama contribute to character-building?

Special Assignments

1. Write a description of Rubens's painting, *Christ in the House of Simon*.
2. Read *The Life of Alice Freeman Palmer*, by G. H. Palmer, and give examples of the way in which early hardship helped her to appreciate the needs of others.
3. Read *The Friendly Road*, by David Grayson.

CHAPTER XV

THE SUPREME TEACHER AND HIS PARABLES

Matthew 13; Luke 15; Colossians 3: 3-23.

I. No Portrait of the Master.

We have viewed the figure of the Master from many sides: as eloquent preacher to the masses in Galilee, as brilliant antagonist, challenging the religious leaders of the Jews, as the organizer and instructor of the Twelve, as the creator of a new system of morals and religion, destined to revolutionize the world. Yet we have made little progress toward really comprehending his greatness or explaining his achievements. Would a portrait help us? "The Gospels contain no portrait of Jesus. They tell us nothing of his face or form. All reputed descriptions or likenesses are apocryphal and spurious. The master painters and sculptors, mediæval and modern, have lavished their genius in the effort to put on canvas or carve in marble their conceptions of the Christ, and these have varied with the time and place and race of the artists. They have pictured many types, from the pale and haggard ascetic and the saintly spiritual to the blond and robust mingler with men; from the worn but majestic Christ before Pilate to the strong and gracious Master looking on the rich young ruler" (Grose, *Never Man So Spake*).

Study Hofmann's *Head of Christ*, a detail of *Christ and the Rich Young Man*, and Raphael's *Head of Christ*, a detail of *The Transfiguration*, and note how far short they both fall of attaining perfection. Hofmann makes

the face moral and spiritual and Raphael depicts faith, repose, and a vision of things heavenly. Raphael suggests possibly the wage-earner and strong helper on whom a widowed mother may lean. But where are the many other sides of his nature and activity? Where is the "friend, teacher, son, brother, physician, wedding-guest, mourner, father confessor, preacher, denouncer, temple-cleanser, pilgrim, fugitive, wonder-worker, prophet, lawgiver, social lion, friend of the demi-monde, story-teller, reformer, visionary, mystic, Jewish Messiah, martyr, Son of Man, Son of God! . . . These are all facets of the flawless jewel; we must turn the crystal slowly and meditatively, holding it up to the light of our spiritual experience, in order that each plane may flash its message to us. The whole we can never grasp in one act of sight; it comes to us as a synthesis of insights, and we realize it as an unvisualized emotion. So with all things that have an infinite element; they must be apprehended by the imagination as symbol and experienced by the heart as feeling."

"The great idea baffles wit,
Language falters under it,
It leaves the learnèd in the lurch.
Nor art nor power nor toil can find
The measure of the eternal Mind,
Nor hymn, nor prayer, nor church."

—Bailey, *Gospel in Art*, 435, 436.

2. The Teacher of Mankind.

We might think of listing Jesus among the teachers of the world, for everywhere in the Gospel of Mark he is pictured as teaching. By the sea, in the house, on the street, in the fields, always he is teaching. They call him rabbi. He answers their questions, he gives them many lessons. Above everything else he is a teacher.

Yet it does not seem appropriate to list him with Socrates, Arnold of Rugby, and Mark Hopkins, even though they were great teachers. An experiment has been suggested as follows: in a room full of people ask the question, "What would you do if suddenly Mark Hopkins should appear from the other world and be introduced as President Hopkins, the great teacher?" Would they not rise up and do him honor? "What would you do if Jesus Christ should walk into the centre of the room?" They would certainly all fall on their faces.

Think of Jesus as the great teacher in two respects: as master of thought, and as master of literary expression. His attempt to put God at the centre of all our thinking was the greatest effort that the human mind has made; and he was successful. The idea of God is the most wonderful that has ever dawned on the mind of man. God at the centre of the universe, reaching out to every heavenly body; God at the centre of human history, dominating every nation, yet ruling them by some inner, persuasive power and not by force; God at the centre of every human life, ready to help, quick to reprove, never at a loss to know how to save, yet strangely limited by the evil will of man—it was such a God that he presented to his generation.

On all sides there were petty gods, appealing for the allegiance of their worshippers. There were gold gods, wooden gods, gods in costly temples, supported by elaborate systems of worship. All these were useless to men, indeed they had become a bar to progress. Jesus' task was "to induce men to rethink God." It was hard to clear away the clutter of the ages. It seemed impossible to men that there should be a religion without priests, smoking altars, temples, many laws, and many

ceremonies. Jesus wanted men to go directly to God in prayer, and to think of him as a partner with them in making the world better.

Moreover, Jesus did not propose to limit the knowledge of God to a select few, but actually planned for the great mass of mankind to know him and to change their lives by direct and personal contact with him. He changed the face of human history by this master-thought. To-day the gods that are no-gods are disappearing, and with them their kings and priests; in place of them is the Father of Jesus Christ, the spiritual God, and with him millions of followers who pray directly to him and undertake to obey him.

How did Jesus express these ideas? By means of the parable, that literary form which he brought to perfection. Doctor George A. Gordon has truly said, "In the living wisdom of the world . . . there is nothing to match the parabolic wisdom of Jesus." The stories of the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, the Lost Sheep, the Sower, the Pearl of Great Price were not even put into written form by the Master, yet they are supreme in thought and expression. They are the best-known stories in the world, while at the same time they contain the most profound thought.

Study, for example, the Parable of the Prodigal Son, and note in it especially the portrayal of character. There is the father, strong, capable, having all that the world desires in the way of home and business, yet supremely loving. This represents God, and has made clear and convincing the meaning of God to endless millions of the human race to whom theology has made no appeal. In contrast with the father is the wayward boy with his false notion of the chief good in life. He goes his way, leaving behind home and love, and spend-

ing his money on persons who cannot love and on things that do not count. As in a mirror mankind sees itself in that picture. The hard experiences of life send the boy home, for deep in his mind is the love of the father whom he cannot forget. Then the older brother appears to remind us all of the meanness that sneaks in uninvited at the very moments when we should be at our best. "There is no philosophy of human history like that contained in the Parable of the Lost Son. The vision of good, real and apparent, the sources of tragic mistake in confounding appearance and reality, the discipline of suffering, the awakening power of disillusionment, the illumination of experience, and the benignity of the Eternal Reality sovereign in all the courses of thought and life, are here depicted by a genius to whom man's intellect and heart are utterly transparent. There is hardly a phrase in this profound and wonderful parable that does not compress within itself a world of meaning for mankind" (G. A. Gordon).

Study the Parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:4-7) with that picture of the joy of heaven over one lost sheep. There in the sheepfold as the great storm threatens is the good shepherd counting his flock. To his sorrow he finds one missing. "There were ninety and nine that safely lay in the shelter of the fold." The lost one must be found. So the good shepherd representing the heavenly Father goes out into the storm and climbs over dangerous places, and rescues the lost one. Alfred Soord has painted the scene in his *Lost Sheep*. There is the sheep clinging to the edge of the precipice. One more step and she will fall into the gulf below. Close above the eagles are making ready to seize upon the prey. The storm is beginning and it will soon be dark. But the shepherd presses on until the sheep is saved.

The power of this story told by Jesus concerning the Father's love and human need is evidenced by the fact that scores of artists have tried to paint the scene and many poets have put it into song. Why so many paintings on the parables—many scores of them? Why over eighty paintings of the Nativity in the galleries of Europe? Why all the books of description, why all the poems about Jesus? Why all the great pieces of music inspired by him? Because whether as teacher or Lord he was earth's great artist.

3. His Freedom from Narrowness.

The Master's mission was carried out in one little country, and among a people notorious for exclusiveness. He was by race a Jew. How did it come about that his teaching is universal? His achievement in creating the Lord's Prayer should win for him eternal fame for universality; there is no nation on earth, of whatever race or religion to which it does not apply.

Hillis attributes Jesus' universal appeal to the simplicity of his message, its freedom from the complexity and cumbrousness of the philosophers. "He rises like a white shaft, simple, yet sublime. In every realm simplicity is the proof of greatness. . . . All the immortals, Moses, Paul, and Socrates, are men plain to the verge of harshness. All who are 'to the manner born' carry with them a certain air of quiet repose, and their simplicity is the finest ornament of their greatness. Nature achieves all her strength and beauty by the avoidance of complexity."

Those who seek to understand the reasons for the wide appeal of Jesus will profit by comparing the parables of Jesus with Tennyson's great parable of life, *The Holy Grail*. Tennyson has beauty of style and real

depth of thought, but the Holy Grail is not for the mass of people to enjoy. It is complex and full of little refinements of style. Here and there are passages of clear beauty and power, as, for example:

“For good ye are and bad, and like to coins,
Some true, some light, but every one of you
Stamped with the image of the King.”

But in many passages there are unusual words and literary allusions which the trained reader alone can enjoy. An example of this is the description of the strange chair in which no one could sit without losing himself.

Another example of the universality of Jesus' mind was his ability to coin words and phrases for the whole race. H. H. Horne, in his *Jesus—Our Standard*, has given a long list of such words, “coined in a poet's soul, [who] has caught and portrayed those bits of life, charged them with emotion, surcharged them with spiritual meaning, and committed them to the keeping of man's heart forever.” Among them are the following: The night wind blowing where it listeth, The branch abiding in the vine, The light of the world, The outer darkness, The cup of cold water, The sheep and the goats, The blind leading the blind, The cock crowing, The many mansions, The righteous shining forth as the sun, The great gulf fixed, The whitened sepulchres, The gates of hell, The ninety and nine.

4. The Originality of His Teaching.

It is possible to find parallels to many teachings of Jesus. In China there was the Golden Rule; in Israel, the Kingdom of God; in the Proverbs one may find the elements of the Parable of the House on the Rock

and on the Sand; in the teachings of John the Baptist there was the same emphasis on having the heart right with God that Jesus gave; and there were many faint foreshadowings of his thought in many nations. But he put something new into the things he taught by *living* them, spiritualizing them, and lifting them to the universal plane.

We may try to understand Jesus' originality by comparing him and his words with other men and their teachings. Abraham Lincoln and Socrates were different from any other men in the American or Greek peoples. John Hay, Lincoln's private secretary, said that next to Christ Lincoln was the best man that ever lived. In him surely "was something new, something excellent." Socrates contributed much to the Greeks and through them to the world. But what did either of these men teach which compares with the Sermon on the Mount, the Good Samaritan, the Lord's Prayer? May we not all agree with Doctor George A. Gordon: "Jesus was a modern man, the first, the original, the creative modern man. In him the spirit of man broke from the solemn melancholy of Egypt, the high exclusiveness of Israel, and the sovereign aristocracy of Greece, into the vision of the intrinsic dignity and measureless worth of man as man. The world has been sadly unfaithful to that vision, yet the vision itself has never altogether faded from our distracted life; to-day it abides in strength, and the person who was its original representative is still its authentic and incomparable type."

"O Christ of contrasts, infinite paradox,
Yet life's explainer, solvent harmony,
Frail strength, pure passion, meek austerity,
And the white splendor of these darken'd years,—
I lean my wondering, wayward heart on Thine."

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Why has no artist done justice to the figure and face of Jesus?
2. What has led men to put his work of teaching first in the description of his activities?
3. What was his teaching concerning God?
4. How did Jesus differ from other teachers with respect to the masses of mankind?
5. What literary form did he bring to perfection in his teachings? Give examples.
6. Give G. A. Gordon's estimate of the Parable of the Prodigal Son.
7. What great hope did Jesus express in the Parable of the Mustard Seed?
8. Name some phrases which Jesus coined.
9. How did Jesus make the things he taught seem new?

Oral Discussion

1. What are some of the qualities of the Master that Hofmann does not show in his portrait of his face?
2. What was it in Jesus that would make men bow down before him?
3. What kind of gods were many worshipping when Jesus came?
4. What does Soord's picture, the *Lost Sheep*, borrow from the New Testament?

Special Assignments

1. Read Bushnell's *Character of Jesus* and make an outline of the book.
2. What moral peril was involved in making images of the gods?
3. Write an essay on the truths about the kingdom which are taught in the seven parables in Matthew 13.
4. Report the scene in *Lorna Doone*, by Blackmore, in which John Ridd rescues two sheep from the blizzard.

Part 5

FAREWELL TO GALILEE

CHAPTER XVI

A DECISION THAT MEANT DEATH

Mark 8 : 27-9 : 13; Matthew 16 : 13-17 : 23; Luke 9 : 18-36;
2 Corinthians 5 : 14-21.

i. A Scene at the Foot of Mount Hermon.

The place is beautiful but the occasion is tragic. On a grassy slope from which one of the three brooks which form the Jordan rushes forth from the base of Mount Hermon twelve men are reclining with Jesus in their midst. They are far from the crowds that usually press upon them, for they are twenty-five miles north of Capernaum. As we draw near enough to look on their faces, we see that these faithful followers of the Master have been summoned to a serious conference. At last we hear Jesus say, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" It seems strange that he should ask his followers to tell him what the people are saying. Evidently he is discouraged or has suffered some reverses. And that is the fact. When he chose the Twelve his cause was very popular, but his popularity is waning now; many even of his followers have abandoned him. The Pharisees who have been opposing him for months have recently intensified their opposition to him.

It is clear that he cannot promote his kingdom peaceably in Galilee. It is concerning these things that he is now having a discussion with his disciples at Cæsarea Philippi.

The disciples tell him that people regard him as one of the prophets. Then he asks them a personal question that calls for a decision: "Who do you say I am?" Peter is the spokesman as usual; while the others in their uncertainty keep silent, he cries out: "Thou art the Christ." Jesus said to Peter: "Blessed art thou . . . and I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter (rock), and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Evidently the other disciples did not know what to say. Jesus had consistently refused to claim the messiahship, and did not seem to like to talk about it. Now unexpectedly he admits that he is the Messiah and praises Peter for perceiving the truth. There has been a difference of opinion concerning the meaning of what he said to Peter. He probably meant that Peter was the foundation of the church somewhat as George Washington was the foundation of the United States; he was to be first of the great leaders in the new movement. Then he charged the perplexed disciples to tell no man that he was the Messiah.

2. Events that Led to This Crisis.

The Gospel of Mark, on which we are basing the historical framework of our life of Jesus, gives the reader the impression that events succeeded one another rapidly. After Jesus had won popularity by his teaching and his healing in different parts of Galilee, the Twelve were sent out on their mission (Mark 6:7-13). While they were absent Jesus worked steadily

among the people and they heard him gladly, for we read that five thousand of them hurried to him when he made an appointment with the Twelve on their return to retire to a secluded spot and make their report. The story gives the impression that Jesus was greatly moved by the multitude wandering about without guidance or hope (6:34). The narrative also suggests that something unusual had happened, for he hastily constrained the Twelve to leave by boat while he sent the crowd away and departed alone to the mountain to pray. What actually happened is mentioned in John 6:15, which reports that the people were so enthusiastic that they "were about to come and take him by force, to make him king." The situation was made more serious by the fact that the Passover was at hand and throngs of pilgrims might be quickly assembled and start a revolution. Jesus might do what other leaders had done. He could announce that he was the Messiah and raise a large force and try to overthrow the Roman government in Palestine.

He was therefore greatly troubled because his conception of religion was so different from that of the people. On the one hand the masses were demanding that he declare himself the Messiah, and change the unhappy conditions of life; on the other were the Pharisees and Sadducees (8:1-21), backed by the local government, plotting against him, while his followers were abandoning him. He had not planned to confess himself as Messiah at this time even to his disciples, because there was danger that his dearest religious hope would be destroyed by political and social ambition. He was compelled, however, in view of the crisis brought about by the conflicting forces to tell the Twelve that he was in a sense the Messiah.

3. Jesus Foretells His Death.

Before the Twelve could recover from their astonishment over his admission and over his strange words to Peter he added a statement that left them mystified and afraid (9:32). He said that he must die in order to carry out his plan. Peter with perhaps a new sense of his importance as a result of the high position that Jesus had predicted for him in the new Kingdom rebuked him and said it was impossible that the Messiah should die.

We know that this idea that the Messiah should die a violent death was an entirely new thing in Jewish history. Peter saw that all would be lost if Jesus' followers got that idea. But Jesus insisted that his death was inevitable and that Peter was not thinking as God thought. Even then the disciples failed to understand and probably thought that this was only another "parable" perhaps, teaching that Jesus as the Son of Man from heaven would retire for a time and then suddenly appear and take control of his kingdom. But a little later Jesus repeated his assertion that he was to be put to death.

A study of Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 shows that many passages imply the idea of one who would suffer in order to become redeemer. Jesus knew the Old Testament thoroughly and he must have appreciated the references in so beautiful a passage as that of Isaiah. If, as Luke suggests, he grew in wisdom may it not be that in this crisis he was inspired by the picture of the suffering servant in the Old Testament to decide upon a new course of action for himself? Instead of continuing the attempt to establish his kingdom in Galilee, which later would spread through all the earth, he

would follow the way of the cross, and thus by a wholly spiritual process draw all men unto him. That he had come definitely to this conclusion seems evident, for immediately after his rebuke of Peter he called the multitude to join the group of his disciples and listen to this statement: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it."

4. The Transfiguration.

While we cannot follow the Gospel of John as a chronological statement of the events in Jesus' life we may find in it valuable explanations of those events. In 6:66, 67 it is stated that many of Jesus' disciples went back, and walked with him no more. "Would ye also go away?" Jesus said to the Twelve. Peter said: "We cannot go away, for you alone have the words of eternal life." This evidently fixes the scene of the Transfiguration as following Jesus' announcement of his death. The Twelve were disappointed and almost ready to give up their work for the Kingdom. In order to meet this situation Jesus took Peter, James, and John upon a spur of Mount Hermon for a night of prayer and consultation. While he prayed the three men fell asleep. The report of the Transfiguration in Luke suggests that the disciples were awakened suddenly and had a vision.

This night experience strengthened the faith of Peter, James, and John, and must have been a comfort to Jesus. Heaven seemed to come near them and the vision of Elijah and Moses would assure the disciples that Jesus was what he claimed to be. After the Trans-

figuration the Twelve went straightforward to Jerusalem with their Master, and showed no hesitation or doubt.

Just what happened on the mountain is not clear to us. We may gain help from Saint Francis. It is reported in the *Legend of the Three Companions* that Saint Francis had retired with three companions to Monte Alverna in the upper Arno to meditate on the sufferings of the Saviour. While praying there, he had a vision of Christ so intense that he was reported to have borne the nail-prints on his hands. It is profitable to read the *Life of Saint Francis* by Paul Sabatier, not only because of this experience, but also for many fine suggestions that come out of the inner life of this earnest Christian. Books of biography are often the best interpreters of the Bible.

5. Raphael's "Transfiguration."

The painting of *The Transfiguration* in the Vatican Gallery in Rome is the interpretation by a great artist of this experience that came to Jesus at a critical moment. In the upper part of the picture Jesus is represented as on the clouds between Elijah and Moses. Below them Peter has fallen on his face, John is protecting his eyes from the bright light by holding up his hand, while James is kneeling in awe.

In the lower half of the picture the story of Mark 9:14-29 is portrayed. At the centre is the sick boy who formed the problem for the disciples. All the lines of the painting point toward the figure of Christ, who is the solution of the problem. Bailey, in his *The Gospel in Art*, declares that this picture is Raphael's masterpiece, a supreme composition and a supreme work of character interpretation. It expresses the deepest

truth of life, that man needs redemption and that in Christ that need is met.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Tell the story of Jesus' great decision at Cæsarea Philippi.
2. How may the circumstances connected with the feeding of the five thousand have influenced Jesus' decision to announce his messiahship? See John 6:15.
3. Why had he before this refused to talk about it, or let others call him Messiah?
4. What did Jesus mean by calling Peter the rock upon which he would build his church?
5. What did Jesus declare was necessary in order to carry out his plan as Messiah?
6. How had the Old Testament prepared the way for this new idea of a suffering Messiah?
7. Describe the Transfiguration. How does Raphael's painting interpret it?
8. How did that strengthen the disciples and comfort Jesus?
9. Give an experience that Saint Francis had on Monte Alverna which seems like that of Jesus.

Oral Discussion

1. Why did the answers that the disciples, except Peter, gave Jesus at Cæsarea Philippi disappoint him?
2. What attitude of the Pharisees may have led Jesus to decide upon this conference?
3. What did Jesus say might be the consequence to any man who should follow him?
4. Why did Jesus encourage people to follow him if it meant self-sacrifice?
5. What is the meaning of Mark 8:36?

Special Assignments

1. Does Jesus' feeding of the five thousand imply that he would oppose the forming of organizations to care for the poor and to investigate the causes of poverty?
2. Write a description of Raphael's life.
3. Read the life of Saint Francis of Assisi by Paul Sabatier.
4. Arrange a harmony of the three Gospels in parallel columns on the Transfiguration.

CHAPTER XVII

“HE SET HIS FACE TO GO TO JERUSALEM”

Mark 10: 1-45; 14: 3-9. With references to Luke 9: 51 to 19: 28.

1. The Lull before the Storm.

The rainy season was over, flowers covered the valleys, and the song of birds filled the air when Jesus turned his face toward Jerusalem. New courage filled the disciples, following the Transfiguration. Jesus and his disciples began the long journey to Jerusalem, travelling slowly and teaching and healing on the way. There was little opposition from the Pharisees and the fierce hostility of the priests at Jerusalem had not yet been aroused. It was the lull before the storm, the Indian summer preceding the frosts of winter. To this period Mark gives only one chapter of his Gospel, while Luke fills ten chapters with wonderful parables and interesting episodes in the life of the Master. The journey began at Mount Hermon, there was a secret visit in Capernaum, and then one fiery episode on the first day when the group undertook to pass through Samaria.

2. Calling down Fire.

Luke reports a scene which Mark omits (Luke 9: 51-56) concerning the refusal of the inhabitants of a village of Samaria to entertain Jesus. An old feud is recalled, for the narrative says they were hostile because

he was on his way to Jerusalem. The Samaritans were probably only returning the hatred which the Jews often showed toward them, because the Jews would have no dealings with the Samaritans. James and John, well termed "Sons of Thunder," became excited and asked Jesus to order lightning from heaven to burn them. Jesus rebuked his devoted followers and turned back from Samaria probably across the valley of Esdraelon through the ancient city of Bethshan. It is a pity that we have no records of Bethshan at this time for it has proved to be one of the most ancient and important places ever uncovered by the excavators' shovels. Crossing the Jordan not far away they would camp for the night in the valley on the east side. At that season of the year it was more beautiful than later in the summer when the rushing waters of the river, the green grass of the valleys, and the snow cap on Mount Hermon had given way before the summer heat.

3. The Defender of Women and Children.

On the way down the valley Jesus, who had now become famous, met many people who asked him questions. One day a Pharisee asked him if it was lawful to divorce a wife (Mark 10: 2-12). Jesus replied, "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." He knew the bitterness and hardship that come from divorce. When a little writing on a sheet of paper is all that stands between a woman and the street it was a very common thing to find a woman turned out of her home and earning a precarious living, often by the vilest means. To-day in the Orient, wherever the Mohammedan faith prevails this evil custom continues. Woman has few rights and the selfishness of man is unrestrained. Our most powerful influence in opposi-

tion to easy divorce is the spirit of Jesus manifested in Christian institutions.

Little children with all sorts of diseases were brought to Jesus, and sometimes serious discussions of theology would be interrupted by parents anxious that Jesus should touch some child. The disciples, seeking to guard Jesus from annoyance would try to drive these parents away. This made Jesus indignant and he gave voice to a sentiment that has had incalculable power for good in the lives of helpless young children. "Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God."

4. Right in Heart. (Mark 10:32-45).

A curious expression was used in the gospel to describe the feelings of the disciples during this journey when Jesus, preoccupied and burdened with the thoughts of what was before him, walked so rapidly that he often got far ahead of them. They were "amazed" and "afraid" as they hurried along behind. One day James and John overtook him and proposed something that greatly aroused the others when they heard about it. They said to Jesus, "When you establish your kingdom, let us have the two highest offices."

Jesus was disappointed in two respects. First, at the selfishness of these two in trying to get ahead of the others. Second, at the wrong conception they still held concerning his kingdom. After all these months of teaching he had not been able to show them the spiritual nature of the Kingdom of God. So he repeated for the third time his solemn assertion that as Messiah he was about to die.

It is often asserted that these political ambitions reveal the unworthiness of these men. This is not the

most likely explanation, for they had proved in many ways their sincerity in following Jesus. The fact is that the disciples, like men of later generations, could not get rid of the old patterns which dominated their thinking. To be a king and to have a kingdom meant to them something political. It was beyond them to make new patterns, to fashion new forms of thought that would better express the ideals of Jesus, which they really held to as earnestly as they held to their own lives. Their heads were wrong, but their hearts were right.

5. A Blind Beggar and a Rich Tax-Collector.

The scope of Jesus' friendship is illustrated by his relations with Bartimæus and Zacchæus. When he approached Jericho the people heard some one crying out "Son of David, have mercy on me, Son of David, have mercy on me." This was the first time in which the Messiah had been spoken of in these terms, so far as our record goes. The crowd tried to stop the blind man from calling out to Jesus. But his appeal had reached the ear of the Master and he healed the man.

A little later in the streets of the city when a great throng pressed around the little group of travellers, a short man was seen climbing a tree. Jesus said, "Come down, for I will take dinner with you to-day." Zacchæus showed evidences that he was truly converted, because he offered to divide his property with any whom he may have wronged.

The next day when Jesus was slowly walking up the hill half-way to Jerusalem he was reminded of a place in the road where robbers often attacked travellers. There he told the story which has since become one of

the most famous in the world, The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). See chapter XIII.

6. Mary and Martha. (Luke 10:38-42.)

Modern travellers have pointed out to them the ruins of a house which the guides call the site of the home of Mary and Martha. It lies among a group of mud huts, and the whole village to-day consists of not more than forty Moslem hovels. On the basis of that, it is often said that we are disillusioned when we see Palestine, that we lose much of the pleasure that we used to have when we imagined the scenes in Jesus' life. But that is not true to experience. Great artists present the matter to us in a truer light when they picture many of the homes of Palestine as large and beautiful.

Siemiradski, for example, has painted *Christ with Mary and Martha* in front of the house in Bethany, which he represents as a wide-spreading villa of white stone. There is a garden with seats protected from the sun by trees and vines; there is a broad approach with inviting steps; and a general air of hospitality. Martha is standing on the steps with a pitcher to draw water. She is evidently irritated and on the point of scolding Mary who is talking with Jesus in the garden as unconcernedly as if there were no dinner to prepare. Then Martha asks Jesus to have Mary help her serve. "But the Lord answered and said unto her, 'Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen the good part which shall not be taken away from her.'" Martha is the type of action and Mary the type of meditation. They are found everywhere. Where there is a Saint John, there is also a Peter. Where a Martin Luther, there an Erasmus. Kipling has expressed this endless

contrast that appears in human life in his *The Sons of Martha*:

"The Sons of Mary seldom bother, for they have inherited
that good part,
But the Sons of Martha favor their mother of the careful soul
and the troubled heart;
And because she lost her temper once, and because she was
rude to the Lord, her guest,
Her Sons must wait upon Mary's Sons—world without end,
reprieve or rest. . . .

And the Sons of Mary smiled and are blessed—they know the
angels are on their side,
They know in them is the grace confessed, and for them are
the mercies multiplied.
They sit at the Feet—they hear the Word—they know how
truly the Promise runs.
They have cast their burden upon the Lord, and—the Lord
he lays it on Martha's Sons."

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. What great difference in the amount of space given to the account of the last journey of Jesus is to be noted in Mark and Luke?
2. What discouraging experience did the disciples have at the very beginning of the journey? See Luke 9: 51-56.
3. What was Jesus' teaching about divorce? Why?
4. Why were the disciples amazed and afraid as they followed Jesus to Jerusalem?
5. In what two ways was Jesus disappointed in the disciples?
6. What may we say in behalf of the disciples?
7. Tell the stories of the blind beggar and Zacchæus.
8. What background does Siemiradski in his *Christ with Mary and Martha* furnish us for the familiar story?
9. What two types of persons are represented by Mary and Martha?

Oral Discussion

1. Was Jesus still popular during this last journey to Jerusalem?
2. Do you think that John and James really wanted Jesus to call down fire from heaven?
3. What is the modern tendency regarding divorce?

4. What is the Mohammedan practice with reference to divorce?
5. What political idea about the kingdom still remained in the minds of the disciples?

Special Assignments

1. To what extent has the Gospel of Luke influenced the modern attitude toward women and children?
2. Describe Von Uhde's painting, *Suffer the Little Children to Come unto Me.*

Part 6

THE LAST DAYS

CHAPTER XVIII

JESUS ANNOUNCES HIMSELF AS MESSIAH

Mark 11:1-11; Matthew 21:1-11; Luke 19:29-44.

1. The Connection of Events in Passion Week.

Passion week occupies a very large space in the Gospels, yet all the events occur within the eight days. It is convenient for beginners in this study to memorize the following table:

Sunday	The Triumphal Entry.
Monday	The Cleansing of the Temple.
Tuesday	The Debate with the Pharisees and Saducees.
Wednesday	A Quiet Day in Bethany.
Thursday	The Last Supper.
Friday	The Crucifixion.
Saturday	In the Tomb.
Sunday	The Resurrection.

2. The View from Olivet on the First Palm Sunday.

When the procession from Bethany toward Jerusalem reached the south shoulder of the Mount of Olives where the Holy City first comes into the view of the traveller,

we may imagine that Jesus stopped for a moment. It was at this point, Luke says, that he wept over the city.

The view was glorious. The morning sun lighted the gilding of the temple roof, and the white walls of the city rose in contrast with the dark valley of the Kidron. On the side of the hill as one looked down toward the valley, a little to the right was the Garden of Gethsemane. Across the valley, and rising above the city walls, was the palace of the high priest, and the Prætorium with its guard of Roman soldiers. Just beyond the city, not far from the western walls was the "Green Hill, without the city wall." But Jesus would not linger on the lovely panorama, for its beauty was external. Hidden behind the walls was ugliness and crime and impending tragedy.

3. The Fulfilling of Prophecy.

Jesus had sent from Bethany two disciples to arrange for his entrance into the city in keeping with Zechariah 9:9. "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass." The disciples had brought the colt out to Bethany and Jesus was now riding into the city as a sign that he was the Messiah. As the procession moved down the side of Olivet, across the valley, and up the sharp ascent to the gate of the city, the multitudes were spreading garments and branches in the road in honor of Jesus. Passing through the gate the procession stopped at the temple, and Jesus went inside and "looked round about at all things," and then returned to Bethany with the Twelve.

Why did Jesus ride into the city in fulfilment of that prophecy if he did not intend to meet the expectations

of the people, for assuredly their expectations were chiefly political? The answer is that he did fulfil the deeper elements of the Old Testament hope of a Messiah. At Cæsarea Philippi he had announced to his disciples that in a sense he had adopted the messianic mission. There was no better way to proclaim his intentions than by the Triumphal Entry. He wanted to test the willingness of the nation to accept God's plan, and this procession would bring the issue to a head. If the leaders of the people would seriously consider what Jesus meant, and with him inquire thoroughly into the meaning of Zechariah's prophecy, then Jesus might convince them of the spiritual trend of their scriptures culminating in Isaiah 53. It would be a wonderful thing if he could convert the nation to the ideals of Isaiah. A study of Luke 19:37-44 shows that Jesus felt it his duty to make this appeal to the nation, yet all the time had the conviction that they would reject him, their only hope of peace.

4. A Drama of World History.

Great artists see in events what smaller minds fail to discover. Doré, in his painting of *Christ Entering Jerusalem*, depicts the inner meaning of the messiahship. One sees Christ riding under an arch grander than was ever built by any nation; representatives of many races are bowing before him; even the angels, chanting perhaps "A Saviour to all peoples," waiting attendance on the scene. With uplifted face and hand Christ seems to hold the world in his view and in his power. He is no longer the Jewish Messiah but the universal Redeemer.

Our failure to understand the Gospel story of the Triumphal Entry, if we do fail, is due to our lack of

appreciation of the deeper meanings of the limitless person under a limited title. Messiah was a symbol for king, and a Jewish king at that. The symbol was too small, conveyed a wrong impression, and Jesus did not like to use it. In fact he never used it until the very last, and then only with reservations.

What was in his mind? Did he have a vision of establishing God's ideals in the whole world? Was he filled so completely with the spirit of God that he felt the good-will and the power within him overleaping national and racial bounds? Surely he had a mighty zeal to make love reign everywhere. If he grew, learning "obedience through the things which he suffered," did he gradually come to understand that he was God's chosen leader for all mankind? The Gospels represent him as revealing God. Not as a man who was made a God but as the supreme revelation of God. He was different from all men. He was more sure of God. He knew no sin. He knew that he had the power to save the world and so it was only natural for him to say, "Come unto me and I will give you rest."

5. Consequences of the Rejection of Jesus.

When the Jews rejected Jesus they involved themselves and future generations in great trouble. Within a few years Jesus' prophecy of the fall of Jerusalem had been fulfilled by the terrible destruction of the city by the Romans. As time went on the Jews were scattered in almost every nation on earth. Nowhere did they find permanent freedom of opportunity or escape from persecution. Their ill-treatment by the nations has formed one of the shameful pages of human history.

A Jewish writer suggests that this has been one of the results of the rejection of the prophet of Nazareth.

The Jews have had to suffer as Jesus once terribly suffered.

“Are we not sharers of thy passion ? Yea,
In spirit-anguish closely by thy side
We have drained the bitter cup, and, tortured, felt
With thee the bruising of each heavy welt.
Every land is our Gethsemane.
A thousand times have we been crucified.”

(Florence Kiper Frank.)

Among the many poets who have told the story of the Messiah is Longfellow. His *Christus : A Mystery* has for its first part a section called *The Divine Tragedy*. The whole of it is worth reading and study, but for our present purpose the part entitled, *The Entry into Jerusalem*, has the suggestions that mean most to us. Those whom Jesus has helped are represented by speakers in a dialogue, for example, the Syro-Phœnician woman and her daughter. They stand for that host who would offer praise to him.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Give a probable outline of the events of Passion week.
2. Give a word-picture of the view of the Holy City from the Mount of Olives.
3. What prophecy did Jesus fulfil in riding into the city ?
4. What was Jesus' purpose ?
5. How can you harmonize the Triumphal Entry with Jesus' previous announcement that he was about to die ?
6. Give the meaning of the people's song (Mark 11 : 9, 10).
7. How does the artist Doré suggest the universal elements in this story of the Triumphal Entry ?
8. What were the consequences to the Jewish nation of the rejection of Christ ?

Oral Discussion

1. It is said a little later that Jesus wept at the sight of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. Why was that ?

2. Who composed the multitude that spread branches on the road in honor of Jesus?
3. What phrase in the account in Mark suggests that Jesus believed that he would not see much more of the temple?
4. Do you think that Jesus aroused false expectations in the minds of the people when he rode into the city according to the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9? Why?
5. If the leaders of the nation had studied Isaiah 53 under the guidance of Jesus, what teachings would they have discovered there?
6. Give the scene in English history between Queen Elizabeth and Walter Raleigh.

Special Assignments

1. Make a list of the additions that Matthew and Luke make to Mark's story of the Triumphal Entry.
2. Write an account of the fulfilment of Jesus' prediction in Luke 19:43, 44. See Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book V, chapter 7.

CHAPTER XIX

COLLISION WITH THE PRIESTS

Mark 11:12-12:12, 18-27; Matthew 21:12-22:14; Luke 19:45-20:19.

1. The Story of the Fig-tree.

Monday morning Jesus returned to the city again and entered the temple. We do not know where he spent Sunday night nor the other nights of the week until Thursday. Matthew (21:17) states that he lodged in Bethany, while Luke (21:37) says that he was teaching every day in the temple and every night he lodged on the Mount of Olives. This is not necessarily a contradiction because Bethany was on the eastern slope of the mountain. It is pleasant to think that Jesus was entertained in the homes of his friends at Bethany after those hard days in the temple. Yet he may have purposely refrained from going to his friends' houses after Sunday night to save them from suspicion. Moreover, the climate was warm and the nights pleasant so that the little group, consisting of Jesus and his disciples, may easily have spent the nights out-of-doors.

On the way into the temple Monday morning Jesus came across a fig-tree. It had no fruit and he said it would never bear any. The next day it was observed by the disciples that the tree had begun to die and the story was told that Jesus had cursed it. But a comparison of Luke 13:6-9 with Mark 11:12-25 suggests that Jesus was misunderstood. It was a parable of the Jew-

ish people. They had borne no fruit and there was no prospect that any good would come from them and he predicted that they would soon be destroyed.

2. Doing the Impossible.

In connection with that Parable of the Fig-tree Jesus uttered one of the most remarkable expressions which the Gospels have reported. "Have faith in God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall say unto this mountain, 'Be thou taken up and cast into the sea' and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass, he shall have it."

This statement has gained meaning for us because Jesus made such a revolution in human history. He believed that God could do wonderful things; he felt within him the spirit of God and it gave him a sense of great power. After his Resurrection his followers, making his faith their own, did many things that had hitherto seemed impossible. Without wealth or learning or political influence they started a movement that changed the Roman Empire. Within three hundred years it was declared Christian and the Emperor Constantine was converted to Christ. And since that time the Christian enterprise has gone forward developing in many directions, and gaining power through the centuries under the leadership of Christ.

3. Cleansing the Temple.

On Sunday Jesus had seen things in certain courts of the temple which had made him indignant. There were stalls, evidently hired from the high priest, in which dealers sold doves, lambs, and cattle for the sacrifices. Near by were money-changers to change foreign coin into the Jewish currency which was necessary

for those who wished to make offerings in the temple. Not only was the place dirty and noisy, but also the common people from the country places were being cheated by the greedy venders. He resolved to put an end to that. So next morning, probably with the support of many worshippers from Galilee, Jesus ordered the traders to get out, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers. He even assumed the office of the chief of the temple police and forbade the people to make a short cut from the city to the eastern suburbs through the temple porches. He followed this astonishing deed by an address in which he charged the priests with making God's house a den of thieves. No doubt he would have ended his career at once had he not been backed up by popular sentiment. While the chief priests dared not touch him at the moment, yet they determined in their anger to destroy him.

4. Kirchbach's Painting.

The painting entitled *The Cleansing of the Temple* is helpful to the student of the life of Jesus for several reasons. First, it helps us visualize the beauty of the temple building. In the background of the picture are the lofty columns, the ornamented doorway, and the massive stone work which remind us of the greatness of Herod's temple even though the picture is not an accurate representation of it. Second, it pictures the authority of Jesus. He stands on the great stone steps with the crowd of traders and money-changers before him. They show signs of fear and awe. Jesus is depicted as one who has greater authority than is represented by the wonderful temple in the background. Third, the haste of the traders, the overthrown tables, and escaping animals give us an impression of the weak-

ness and sinfulness of those who set themselves up in opposition to what is right and decent in God's house.

5. No Compromise.

This act of Jesus, which openly defied the highest authority in the Jewish nation except the Roman government, might seem unwise. Why did he not consider how quickly the Sanhedrin might destroy him if they should support the high priest in his rights over the temple? The Sanhedrin was composed of seventy-one distinguished Pharisees and Sadducees, and Jesus would have to consider well his course of action if he opposed them. A compromise that would permit him to go on preaching might have been better than his drastic action in the matter of the traders. But it seemed to him that the time had come for the leaders to make a decision. For many years they had done what was wrong for profit, and in their pride had gone on their way without regard to the poverty and sorrows of the common people.

6. They Dared Not Answer.

Tuesday morning, when Jesus came again into the temple, the priests and scribes met him with a question. They asked him by what authority he had taken that action in the temple. The crowd gathered quickly to see what the Galilean prophet would say to the leaders in answer to their questions. Jesus perceived that the main thing was to discredit them in the eyes of the people and gain popular support. So he put a counter-question which left them in a dilemma. "Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?" If they replied "from heaven," Jesus would ask them why, then, they did not obey John. If they should answer "from

men" they would arouse the antagonism of the common people who regarded him as a prophet of God. The dismayed opponents of Jesus withdrew and had a consultation concerning their answer. This action in itself gave Jesus the advantage, but when they returned and said, "We can't answer your question," the crowd was delighted. And Jesus said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

Then Jesus told a parable about a vineyard, which he applied directly to these leaders whom he had defeated in debate. The vineyard had been rented by husbandmen who refused to pay the rent. They abused the representative of the owner, they badly wounded another man whom he sent to collect the money and finally when he sent his own son they killed him. What will the owner do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen and will give the vineyard to others. The Jewish nation is the vineyard, and the leaders will all be destroyed.

Later some Sadducees, of whom the priests were leaders, tried to catch Jesus on the subject of the resurrection, for the Sadducees did not believe in it. Again Jesus turns the argument against them and shows to the approving crowd that his questioners are ignorant of the Old Testament, in which they pretend to believe.

7. A Contrast between the Priests and a Choir of Children.

Matthew reports a pretty scene in the temple courts after Jesus had cast out the money-changers and traders. A group of children, perhaps members of a temple choir, showed their admiration by singing in honor of the one who had shown his authority, "Ho-

sanna to the Son of David." This recognition by the children of Jesus as the Messiah aroused great indignation among the priests and scribes, who stood scowling near by. But Jesus said, again reminding these supposedly learned men of their ignorance, "Did ye never read, 'Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?'"

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Tell the Parable of the Fig-tree and give the application to current events.
2. What strong expression did Jesus use concerning faith?
3. Did his followers "do the impossible" in human history?
4. Give an account of the cleansing of the temple.
5. How were the priests financially involved in the trading in the temple?
6. What items does Kirchbach's painting, *The Cleansing of the Temple* add to the Bible story?
7. What compromise might Jesus have made with the Jewish authorities that would have enabled him to continue preaching?
8. Explain the point of Jesus' answer to the priests and scribes when they asked him what his authority was for cleansing the temple.

Oral Discussion

1. Where did Jesus spend his nights during Passion Week?
2. Why might it be unsafe for his friends if he allowed them to entertain him?
3. What do you mean by faith?
4. Give examples of institutions, like the Goodwill Farm in Maine, that are supported by faith.
5. When was the Roman Empire declared Christian?

Special Assignments

1. Describe the extent of the trading in the temple, give a list of the animals sold and an account of the money-changers. See Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus*, pages 367-376 in Volume I.
2. Draw a plan of the temple that shows the porches in which the debates were carried on.

CHAPTER XX

CONDEMNATION OF THE JERUSALEM SCRIBES

Mark 12:13-14:9; Matthew 22:15-23:39; Luke 20:20-21:4.

I. The Last Friendly Dinner.

On Tuesday or Wednesday evening of this last week Simon, perhaps the father of Mary and Martha and Lazarus, gave a little banquet to Jesus in the hospitable home at Bethany. Besides the family there were present the disciples and other friends. Within three days Jesus would be crucified. This impending disaster must have made the meal a sad one, for few or none there could be ignorant of what was coming. An event happened which relieved the tension of feeling, and which has been reported all over the world. A woman, whom the Gospel of John identifies as Mary of Bethany (11:2), expressed her appreciation of what Jesus had done for her father, who had been a leper, and for her brother Lazarus, by anointing his head with precious ointment. It cost the price of a laborer's wages for a year. One of the disciples, probably Judas (John 12:4), criticised Mary and said the money should have been spent for the poor, but Jesus praised Mary and said that it would be the last time she could do anything for him. It has been suggested that this angered Judas, and that he went from the banquet to betray Jesus to the priests (Matthew 26:14).

Tennyson, in his *In Memoriam* (Section xxxii), has

noted the significance of this scene in the life of Mary and the friends of the Master whom he had helped.

Her eyes were homes of silent prayer,
No other thought her mind admits
But, he was dead, and there he sits,
And he that brought him back is there.

Then one deep love doth supersede
All other, when her ardent gaze
Roves from the living brother's face
And rests upon the life indeed.

2. The Scribes Try to Catch Jesus in Argument.

The priests laid a trap for Jesus by sending a committee of scribes and Herodians to discredit him in the eyes of the Roman government. When he appeared again in the temple the committee approached as if by chance and began to flatter him. They told him that they knew he was accustomed to tell just what he believed to be the truth regardless of the consequences. They would like to know his idea about this matter of the Roman taxes: "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?" Can a man be a good Jew and do that? Jesus saw their hypocrisy and decided to turn the laugh of the crowd on them. "Bring me a coin," he said. Then getting the scribes to admit that they used such coins regularly and that they thus gave formal recognition to the government that issued them, he turned suddenly to them and said, "Whose is this image" on the coin? They, with some "loss of face" as the Chinese would say, took the coin and replied, "Cæsar's." Then Jesus, turning on his heel, exclaimed, "Give to Cæsar the things that belong to him, and to God the things that belong to him." The people no doubt applauded, and the scribes themselves "marvelled greatly at Him" (Mark 12:17).

One of our foreign missionaries in Japan writes that his class of boys saw the joke on the scribes at once. He was studying Mark with them. One day the lesson was on this debate between Jesus and the scribes. The boys had been reading along soberly as usual until they came to the point where Jesus asked the scribes to bring a coin. When Jesus asked them whose image it was on the coin, the boys laughed aloud. "What is the matter?" the missionary asked. "Good joke on them," replied the boys.

Titian's *The Tribute Money* is a study of one of the scribes who asked Jesus about the tribute. It is regarded as one of the finest character sketches ever produced. It contrasts the scribe with his tanned face, bronzed arms, and close-cropped hair with one of the most beautiful faces of Christ that has ever been painted. The sly, sharp face of the scribe makes us appreciate all the more the master teacher whose expression reminds us that he was not one who could be bluffed or surpassed in skill by any one of that group of Pharisees who had tried to lay a trap for him.

3. The Sincere Scribe.

Many of the scribes were honest men. They were teachers belonging to the party of the Pharisees, and most of them were faithfully doing what they had been instructed to do, that is, to explain the law. By long habit and inheritance they had become petty and could not see things in the large. Those whom Jesus condemned so bitterly were the selfish, rich leaders who had become proud and harsh.

One of these sincere interpreters of the law was inclined to think well of Jesus, and was much impressed by his keen retorts to his cunning questioners. He

asked, "What commandment is the first of all?" The reply was, "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." "The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The scribe perceived the Master's sincerity, and showed by his words and attitude that he liked Jesus. Jesus said to him, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God."

4. The Terrible Woes.

In Matthew 23 Jesus made an indictment against the Pharisees which many modern Jews regard as unfair. They claim that his words were not accurate descriptions of the great mass of the best religious party in Israel. The Pharisees had a beautiful side to their life, they were wholly devoted to God's great cause, they would give their own lives rather than break the law, as many of them had done, when in war the enemy had attacked them on the Sabbath. Rather than fight on the Sabbath, thousands of them gave up their lives without lifting a hand.

They faithfully taught the religion of the Fathers to the children, they supported the services in the synagogue, and produced characters far above the average of their nation. The trouble with them was that as time went on they exaggerated the importance of the little things in the law. Every item was studied to know just what each counted for credit. Goodness consisted in having more merits than demerits, so the Pharisees had a long list of good things to do. The scribe was tempted to become a mere calculator of good deeds that would make a man worthy of salvation. The mind was centred on explanations of the law. These explanations formed the oral law which kept increasing in volume until it amounted to ten or twenty

times the law of Moses. There was no time for the larger things of the spirit. Those who did not keep the law were outcasts and so unsuitable friends, so life became a thing of narrowness and pride. All the sympathy, unselfishness, and broad humanity was dried up at the roots in some of these men.

Jesus declared that the scribes were hypocrites, binding heavy burdens on the poor, while they went free; they loved vain show in dress, the chief seats at dinners and in the synagogue, they delighted in being called "Doctor." They do not enter the Kingdom themselves nor let any one else get in, *i. e.*, their whole system prevents the enjoyment of true religion by themselves or anybody else. There was no logic or sense in many of their teachings; they led their pupils astray. They wash the outside of the cup but leave filthy the inside, and they themselves are whitened sepulchres, whitewashed outside but inside full of dead men's bones. They are serpents, and shall not escape hell. It is no wonder that the Pharisees became angry with Jesus.

5. Transform Human Society, Do Not Destroy It.

Mark 13 pictures the destruction of the world within a generation (v. 30), but the Sermon on the Mount urges the acceptance of principles that will make society permanent. The house should be built on the rock, Christians should be the light of the world, the salt of the earth. Our life should be built for endurance. The Parables of the Leaven and Mustard Seed imply the gradual winning of the world to Christ. Paul, the great interpreter of Christ, established churches at centres of light for generations to come. After the Resurrection the disciples, led by the Holy Spirit, which was the Spirit of Christ (Galatians 4:6; Philippians 1:19) went

forth to win the world to freedom, to growth, and to transform the kingdoms of the world into the Kingdom of our Lord.

In a case like this, when two explanations are possible, it is our duty to choose that one which has the most arguments on its side. The vast majority of the New Testament passages teach that we ought to transform human society and remake human nature into the image of the Master, "seeing that ye have put off the old man with his doings, and have put on the new man, that is *being renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him.*"

6. An Application to Modern Times.

Winston Churchill, in *The Inside of the Cup*, has made a study of the modern Pharisaism of wealth and pride. He pictures a church which has beautiful ceremonies, music, and correct style, but is cold. The poor people and the common folks in the tenements not far away would not be welcomed there. Eldon Parr, one of the leading characters in the story, is a typical Pharisee, while the pastor, Mr. Hodder, has had a vision of Christ and plans to transform his cold church into a real church of Christ. He declared that Mr. Parr and the others must shake out of their minds everything that they had thought that Christianity meant, church-going, creeds, charity, rites, and ceremony. "If they would be Christians . . . let them enter into life, into the struggles going on around them to-day against greed, corruption, slavery, poverty, vice, and crime." They must love as Christ loved, they must have faith—faith in God and faith in man.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Tell the story of the anointing of Jesus in Bethany.
2. To what event did Tennyson allude in his *In Memoriam* in the words "he was dead"?
3. Tell the story of the "tribute to Cæsar." Compare Titian's interpretation of the scene.
4. Make an argument in favor of the scribes.
5. What led one of them to commend Jesus?
6. In what words did Jesus condemn many of the scribes? Is Matthew 23:24 a witticism?
7. In the teachings of Jesus which sentiment predominates, the destruction of human society, or the reform of it and the building of an ideal world?
8. What is the main point of Churchill's *The Inside of the Cup*?

Oral Discussion

1. Who was Simon of Bethany?
2. What Gospel do we depend upon for the name of the woman who anointed Jesus at the banquet?
3. How did they try to catch Jesus in the debate on the resurrection?
4. How did some of the Pharisees merit the severe condemnation which Jesus pronounced upon them in Matthew 23?
5. Give the "Great Invective" of Jesus in your own words.

Special Assignments

1. Read Tennyson's *In Memoriam* and make a list of the references to Jesus or his teachings.
2. Write an essay on the mental superiority of Jesus as shown in the debates with the scribes and the Pharisees. See Hillis, *The Influence of Christ in Modern Life*.
3. Describe the belief of the Pharisees concerning the resurrection.

CHAPTER XXI

THE NIGHT OF THE BETRAYAL

Mark 14: 12-52; Matthew 26: 17-56; Luke 22: 7-53;
1 Corinthians 11: 23-26.

I. Lord, Is It I?

In Jerusalem there is a house which the guides point out to travellers as the one in which the Lord's Supper took place. It would be interesting if we could be sure that it was the very place, but that is now impossible. Yet we may imagine Jesus and the disciples on that Thursday out there on the Mount of Olives making the arrangements to eat the Passover meal together (Mark 14:12-16), and we can think of them as crossing the brook Kidron, entering the city, and finding a welcome in the large upper room in the house owned by the mother of John Mark. The Passover lamb had been sacrificed at the temple and cooked at the house, and all the other articles of food made ready.

They all reclined about the table, then Jesus blessed the first cup of wine, and poured water on their hands and prayed. Bitter herbs, dipped in vinegar, were passed around, then another cup of wine, and the chanting of Psalms 113, 114. A sop (a sort of lamb sandwich, garnished with bitter herbs) was dipped in vinegar and passed around before they ate the roast lamb. The third and fourth cups of wine were taken, followed by the chanting of Psalms 115-118.

During the first part of the meal Jesus made an

announcement that the tragedy that they felt to be impending was to be hastened by an act of treachery on the part of one of those reclining at the table. He said, "One of you shall betray me." They cried, "Is it I?"

Da Vinci's famous painting, *The Last Supper*, depicts the attitude of the disciples at that moment. One way to make vivid our thought of that scene is to study this great artist's conception. He represents the group as sitting rather than reclining. In the centre of the table Jesus is pictured with six men on his right hand and six on his left. They are arranged in groups of three. Nearest Jesus on his right is John leaning on Peter and showing every sign of despair. The artist has given the traditional view of John as the gentle, beloved disciple and has put into his face the beauty and spirituality which really belonged to Jesus. It is reported that Da Vinci felt unable to do justice to the face of Jesus which he painted last.

Next to John impulsive Peter is reaching forth his hand as much as to say, "He shall not be betrayed." In front of Peter is Judas clutching the money bag and showing signs of fear. The group at that end of the table consists of Andrew who is holding up both hands in horror, James the son of Alphæus, reaching his left hand toward Peter as if asking him what this means, and at the end Bartholomew, leaning forward as if too astonished to speak. Nearest Jesus on his left hand are Thomas, James, and Philip. Philip is holding up his finger and asking, "Lord, Is it I?" James, one of the "Sons of Thunder" has both hands stretched out and is evidently shouting "It cannot be." Philip has his hand upon his heart as if to declare his innocence. At the extreme left are Matthew, with both hands

pointing toward Jesus as if to say, "He says so," and Thaddæus leaning toward Simon evidently saying, "It is impossible." Simon has his hands stretched forward with palms upward asserting his innocence. Jesus' right hand, nearest Judas, is turned down and the left is turned upward. His whole attitude is expressive of purity, dignity, and strength. That he is the centre of interest in the picture, all the details indicate.

2. The Broken Body.

The statement of Jesus that one of those at the table would betray him took all the natural joy out of the occasion. There is no hint in Mark that Judas was known to be the traitor. The feeling of uncertainty and dismay must have continued throughout the meal. Judas did not leave the table, according to the first three Gospels, until the whole company left the room to go to an olive garden, where they expected to spend the night. The garden may have belonged to a friend of Jesus, and he and his disciples may have been sleeping there during the week. In this place was to be enacted that night "the most sacred and momentous, in a real sense the most tragic, drama in the world's spiritual history." No one of Jesus' companions seemed to realize the meaning of the occasion, yet it was to change the whole trend and spirit of humanity.

At the table the dazed group went through the Pass-over ceremony, as all good Jews were doing that night, while the Master talked with them about subjects which they afterward recalled with great distinctness. After the lamb was eaten and only the broken fragments were lying on the table, Jesus took a cake of unleavened bread, asked God's blessing on it, and solemnly broke it into pieces and gave a piece to each one present,

evidently not excluding Judas, saying, "Take ye, this is my body." Then he took a cup of wine, prayed again, and they all drank of it, while he said, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many," meaning that his death would bind God and men together in a new covenant, as at Mt. Sinai the old covenant had been ratified by blood (Exodus 24: 5-8).

The Fourth Gospel contains four wonderful chapters said to have been spoken by Jesus at the Last Supper (14-17). "Let not your heart be troubled . . . I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter . . . the Spirit of Truth . . . he shall teach you all things. . . . I am the true vine. . . . Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit. . . . When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth. . . . These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come. . . . I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do!" These and many other remarkable sayings make these chapters precious to Christians all over the world. They truly represent the spirit of the Master and deeply move serious readers with a sense of the divine presence that is ever in our midst.

The influence of the First Communion has been felt wherever the Christian Church has been established. Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox Christians, Protestants of every kind, except Quakers, have from the beginning observed with sacred care this memorial of the Master. Untold millions in many nations have found consolation in this story of the last experiences of the Saviour and in the symbol of his sacrifice. Even more powerful for encouraging purity of heart has this service been, as Longfellow has suggested in his *Children of the Lord's Supper*.

Blest are the pure before God! Upon purity and upon virtue
Resteth the Christian Faith; she herself from on high is de-
scended.

Strong as a man and pure as a child, is the sum of the doctrine,
Which the Divine One taught, and suffered and died on the
cross for.

3. The Scene in the Garden.

When they had finished the Supper, they sang a hymn and went out into the darkness of the night. At this point or somewhere on the way from the city to the slope of Olivet, Judas left them and went to the priests to make arrangements for the arrest. If this Passover meal was held in the house of Mark's mother, it is natural to think, as many have suggested, that John Mark followed behind the disciples, anxious, as any boy would be, to see what was going to happen. Mark 14: 51 states that a young man had followed them and in the excitement of the arrest his only garment, a linen cloth which he had hastily thrown over him before leaving his mother's house, was snatched from him. His presence there would enable him to see what happened so that in later years he could preserve for us the facts in his Gospel.

On the way from the house to the garden Jesus kept on talking with the group, for it was very late, toward midnight probably, and they would not be interrupted. Perhaps no one noticed the departure of Judas. Jesus said that they would all desert him because he was to be smitten and the flock scattered. Peter spoke up at once, "Even if they all desert you, I will not." Jesus sorrowfully replied, "Before the cock crows twice, thou shalt deny me thrice."

At the gate of Gethsemane he left eight of the disciples, while he went on with Peter, James, and John to pray. He said to them, "My heart is almost break-

ing. You must stay here and keep watch." He went on a little farther and threw himself on the ground and prayed that God, if possible, might spare him the trial that seemed about to come upon him. He came back to the three men who had formed the "inner circle" of his friends, and found them sleeping. Three times Jesus prayed alone in great distress of mind, and three times came back to find his supporters sleeping. "Simon," he said, "are you sleeping? Were you not able to watch one hour?"

Then Judas appeared leading a mob, armed with clubs and swords. He walked up to Jesus and kissed him as a sign that he was the man the priests had hired them to arrest. In the struggle that ensued some one (the Fourth Gospel states that it was Peter) struck off the ear of the high priest's slave. Jesus stopped the fight, and rebuked the mob for coming after him in this violent way. Then they led him away. Sidney Lanier has enshrined the spirit of the Master during this scene in the following poem:

Into the woods my Master went,
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame,
But the olives they were not blind to him;
The little gray leaves were kind to him;
The thorn-tree had a mind to him,
When into the woods he came.

Out of the woods my Master went,
And he was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame.
When death and shame would woo him last,
From under the trees they drew him last;
'Twas on a tree they slew him—last
When out of the woods he came.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. What arrangements did the disciples make for the Last Supper?
2. Describe the four groups at the table naming one disciple in each group, according to Da Vinci's painting.
3. What terrible announcement did Jesus make during the first part of the meal? How did it affect Peter, James, and John?
4. Significance of the bread and wine.
5. What addresses of Jesus at the Supper does the Fourth Gospel contain?
6. What influence has the Passover meal had on mankind?
7. What evidence have we that Mark himself was present at the arrest of Jesus?
8. What shows that the Twelve did not understand the serious danger that threatened Jesus?
9. Why did Jesus suffer agony in the Garden?
10. Describe the arrest.

Oral Discussion

1. What shows that Judas' decision to betray Jesus was not made much before Thursday?
2. Evidences that Judas' treachery was not deliberate, and that he had not really meant to bring about the death of Jesus.
3. In what one respect does Da Vinci's picture differ from the account in Mark?
4. What is known about Gethsemane?
5. What assertion of his courage and faithfulness did Peter make?

Special Assignments

1. Write a paper on Da Vinci and his painting *The Last Supper*. See La Farge's *The Gospel Story in Art*, pp. 220-227.
2. Make an argument against the theory that Jesus was destined by Divine Providence to die, and therefore Judas is not to be condemned.
3. The order of events in the modern Jewish Passover meal.
4. An outline of Longfellow's *Children of the Lord's Supper*.
5. Read W. A. Knight's *Outside a City Wall*.

CHAPTER XXII

THE TRIAL OF JESUS

Mark 14: 53-15: 20; Matthew 26: 57-27: 31;
Luke 22: 54-23: 25.

i. The Story of Peter's Denial.

Peter was so sure that he would never desert Jesus (Mark 14: 29) that it is surprising to see how quickly he denied him. From the garden he had followed the high priest's mob to the palace in the Upper City. It was cold at three or four o'clock in the morning in the open court of the high priest's house, and the soldiers had a fire of live coals. Peter stole in to get warm; all the other disciples had fled in the darkness, knowing that they could not help the Master. Moreover, this arrest seemed fatal to their cause. One of the servant girls noticed Peter by the fire and said, "You were with the Nazarene." Peter taken by surprise hastily denied it and declared that he did not know what she meant. Soon the group around the fire joined in with the girl and said that Peter was a Galilean because he had the brogue. Then Peter earnestly and with an oath denied that he knew Jesus at all. This was the third time, and just then he heard the second cockcrowing at dawn. At that moment, according to the Gospel of Luke, the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Harrach, in his picture called *Peter's Denial*, shows Jesus passing through a gallery just above Peter, so that he could hear the denial and the oath. It was a most unfortunate combination of circumstances for Peter. He had only

a little while ago slashed the ear of one of the high priest's servants, and now there confronts him near the fire a cousin of the victim of Peter's sword and said to him, "Did I not see thee in the garden with him?" It was too much for Peter and he gave way. When he saw Jesus looking at him he went out and wept bitterly. There is no comparison between the treachery of Judas and Peter's sudden breakdown. Yet Peter evidently had a weakness which Paul afterward noticed (Galatians 2: 11-13), a tendency to give way for the moment when he was suddenly tempted. In the later history of the church he became a great and noble leader.

2. The Preliminary Investigation.

When the high priest's officers led Jesus into the palace there had already assembled many members of the Sanhedrin, especially those belonging to the Sadducees. For this movement against Jesus had been occasioned largely by his cleansing of the temple which affected the pocketbooks of the priests. These members of the Sanhedrin so hastily summoned before daylight had no authority to condemn Jesus. They simply made a preliminary examination. They had gathered what witnesses they could find, but the witnesses did not agree. Finally the high priest asked Jesus if he was the Messiah. To that question Jesus made an answer which gave the priest the opportunity for which he was looking. Jesus said: "I am; and ye shall see the son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." The high priest now rent his garments in token of his abhorrence of this blasphemy, and the assembly voted that Jesus was worthy of death. In the uproar that ensued some took occasion

to spit on Jesus, and blindfolding him struck him and asked him to guess who hit him.

3. The Trial before Pilate.

Early in the morning some hours after the preliminary investigation which we have described, the Sanhedrin had another meeting, perhaps for the purpose of confirming their action before daylight which may have been unlawful. As soon as the procurator's office was open they hurried Jesus to the barracks where Pilate's office was located and stated their case before the Roman governor, for he alone could pronounce the sentence of death. Pilate asked Jesus, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" He answered, "You say so." Pilate was astonished that Jesus made no further defence. The fine reserve and dignity of the prisoner must have appealed to the Roman governor, and according to the other Gospels he did try to save Jesus. The additions to the story in Matthew, Luke, and John should be carefully studied, but Mark is sufficient to give us a clear idea of what happened. The admission by Jesus that he was the Messiah gave the Sadducees, the priestly party, evidence that would influence Pilate. No priests are named in Mark, but it is clear from the other Gospels and the records of the time that Annas was the retired high priest and Caiaphas, his son-in-law, was the high priest that presented the case to Pilate. The Roman governor would feel it important to take action, for a new Messiah from troublesome Galilee would have a disturbing effect on political conditions.

The priests, fearing that Pilate might defer action, started the cry that Barabbas be released (Luke 23:18), according to the custom by which one prisoner should

be released at a feast. The mob took up the cry that Barabbas, not Jesus, be set free. It seems that Barabbas had been the leader of a rebellion, perhaps of the Zealots. This would make him popular among many of the Jews, even though in the riot he had killed a man. Many years ago it was the custom in Massachusetts to release a prisoner at Thanksgiving time; he would naturally be one that was for some reason popular. Jesus had no one to speak for him in this crowd which was dominated by the priests, so Pilate freed Barabbas and delivered Jesus to be crucified.

4. A Great Painting.

Many details of the trial of Jesus are given in Munkacsy's *Christ before Pilate*. A thorough study of this picture is important for one who would get all the New Testament statements about the trial vividly in his mind. The scene is laid in the Prætorium, part of which was used for barracks for the Roman soldiers who guarded the Roman interests in Jerusalem. The building, sometimes called Antonia, was located at the northwest boundary of the temple platform.

Munkacsy pictures Pilate seated on a throne in the judgment-hall. In front of him there are distinguished priests and lawyers in rich robes that add beauty to the scene. The high priest, standing on steps that lead to the throne, is making a speech with gestures that indicate great earnestness. A Pharisee or some important member of the Sanhedrin is standing with his back against the wall, not far from the throne, and showing in his attitude contempt for Jesus. In a front seat between the high priest and Jesus sits a fat, complacent business man elegantly dressed, with his head canted, teeth set, and hands placed on his knees, as if

he were saying to Jesus, "You tried to break up our trade in the temple, now we'll break you."

A Roman soldier with a spear holds the mob from crowding too close to the throne. Jesus is in the centre, dressed in white, and conspicuous against the dark background of the people pressing into the room. Near Jesus is a woman holding a young child, anxious evidently that the babe should get an impression from the scene that would make the Christian faith a precious thing. The face of Christ is strong, his bearing dignified, and he seems to demand from Pilate recognition of the justice of his cause and the greatness of the principles which he represents.

Pilate has on a Roman toga. Behind him are the letters S. P. Q. R. (Senatus Populus Que Romanus) which together with the symbols of the power of the empire are impressive in contrast with the lack of support which Jesus has. But Pilate shows more weakness than Jesus because he is nervously working his hands, as though uncertain what course to pursue. His face is that of a man who is being judged, while Jesus is the real judge. History has taken the side of the prisoner in this case and pronounced its verdict against the Roman governor.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Tell the story of Peter's denial of Jesus.
2. How does Harrach in his painting bring Jesus into the scene?
3. What may be said in Peter's behalf?
4. Give Mark's brief account of the stages of the trial as found in 14: 55-64 and 15: 1-5.
5. Why were the priests the leaders in seeking the condemnation of Jesus?
6. What admission of Jesus led the Sanhedrin to pass judgment against him?

7. Name several incidents in the trial not mentioned by Mark, but reported in Matthew, Luke, and the Fourth Gospel.
8. Tell of the choice of Barabbas by the multitude.
9. From these scenes show the dignity and strength of Jesus.
10. Contrast Jesus with Pilate in Munkacsy's painting.

Oral Discussion

1. Name four little details of the journey from Gethsemane to the palace of Annas. John 18:12-16.
2. In their haste what did the members of the Sanhedrin do that makes the trial seem illegal?
3. Where was the Prætorium? What was it used for?
4. Why did the high priest bring Jesus before the Roman governor?

Special Assignments

1. Read Daniel 7:13, 14 and Mark 14:61, 62, and write a statement of the meaning of Jesus' claim in the light of his decision to die. See Chapter XVI.
2. Read Mrs. Browning's poem, *The Meaning of the Look*, and present selections from it to the class.
3. Read Edwin Arnold's *The Light of the World*.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE MEANING OF THE CROSS

I Corinthians 1:18-2:2; Mark 15:21-47; Matthew 27:32-66;
Luke 23:26-56.

I. Brief Statement of the Facts according to Mark.

From the judgment-hall of Pilate the soldiers led Jesus to the open court in the Praetorium where they made fun of him and abused him. When the officers were ready to start to the place of execution, the cross was evidently laid on Jesus but soon he was relieved of this heavy burden because of his weakness from fasting and loss of blood and it was carried by Simon of Cyrene, who happened to be passing by. The procession was followed by a considerable number of people, for it was approaching nine o'clock; Roman soldiers, officers, members of the Sanhedrin, a rabble of Jews, and several women were among those who went to Golgotha, a skull-shaped hill, not far away yet outside the city walls. It would be contrary to the Jewish laws of clean and unclean to bury within the city. One old law reads: "They do not bury the dead therein." The hill was identified by General Gordon as the mound about three hundred feet northwest of Herod's gate, which the Jews call, "The Place of Stoning," and the Garden Tomb is close by. Others believe that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on Christian Street contains the real tomb, and travellers may see it in the basement.

When Golgotha was reached, the attendants offered the usual wine and myrrh to quiet his nerves, but Jesus

refused it. The soldiers placed him on the cross, spiked his hands to the crosspiece and his feet to the beam, then set it upright in the hole which they had dug for it. Then they unconcernedly went to playing dice, as they sat down near by, and cast lots for the garments which Jesus had worn. On the crosspiece was inscribed, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Two thieves were crucified at the same time, the one on his right hand, the other on his left.

Hardened Jews passing by shouted, "Ha, thou that destroyest the temple . . . save thyself," and priests mocking said, "He saved others; himself he cannot save." The thieves also reproached him. At twelve o'clock darkness came on and covered the land for three hours. At three o'clock Jesus quoted in agony Psalm 22:1, as at the beginning of his career he had referred to Psalm 2:7. The Roman centurion there on duty said, "Surely this was a son of God." The faithful women who had followed Jesus from Galilee to minister to the disciples stood a little way off. They were the two Marys, Salome, and others. But the disciples dared not appear for fear of arrest.

"At the cross her station keeping
Stood the mournful mother weeping,
Where he hung, the dying Lord;
For her soul of joy bereaved,
Bowed with anguish, deeply grieved,
Felt the sharp and piercing sword."
Stabat Mater.

2. The Cross a Triumph.

Throughout the trial and the Crucifixion, which is the most terrible form of death, Jesus' conduct won the admiration of all serious observers. His dignity and his calm, confident bearing had its influence even on Pilate, and deeply moved the Roman centurion. The cross was

a personal triumph for Christ. It showed the power of character over failure and death. It won the greatest intellect of that century—Paul of Tarsus. It changed him from a proud Pharisee, a murderer of Christians, to a humble preacher of the gospel. At Corinth, years later, he said that he had determined not to know anything in that city of Greek philosophy save Jesus Christ the crucified. Although he was prepared to talk philosophy with the ablest of them, his one message was Christ crucified—the *power of God*. And in the strength of that power arising out of the Crucifixion, Paul started European Christianity.

It won the Roman Empire. Eusebius, a historian of the fourth century, said that the Emperor Constantine himself told him the following story. At about midday, when the sun was beginning to decline, he saw with his eyes the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens, above the sun, and bearing the inscription, “By this conquer.” At the sight he was amazed and his whole army also, for they too saw the miracle. That night in a dream the Christ of God appeared to him and commanded him to procure a standard for his army made in the likeness of the cross, and to use it as a safeguard in all engagements with his enemies. Constantine obeyed the command and suspended a streamer of purple from a spear. On it was a gold crown with the first two letters of the name of Christ. As a reward he had complete victory in the battle which followed.

Whatever you may think of this story it at least represents the fact that within three hundred years the Roman Empire, which had hung Christ on the cross, bowed down to that Crucified Christ as Lord over all. Constantine was baptized as a member of the Christian church in 337 A. D., but as early as 323 at the defeat of

Licinius, coruler with Constantine, Christianity was declared to be the religion of the realm.

3. Our Most Sacred Memorial.

It is difficult to stretch our imaginations to take in the greatness of Christ's conquest of mankind. Of many evidences we may mention one or two that we may try to realize the wonder of the achievement. Why do ladies wear a little gold cross? You might say that they do it because it is an almost universal custom. But how did that come to be so? Because Christ by his death made it sacred. It stands also for purity and safety, and millions of women to-day regard it as a real protection.

A brilliant American leader, Raymond Robins, saw the white cross on a church spire in Alaska, when he was a young gold-digger. The cross and the priest that nobly lived a life of service there, cleansed his purpose. Through him thousands of students have had the vision of the Christ. The cross on the church spires! It is the world's symbol of hope.

4. The Cross in Art and Music.

Munkacsy and Rubens and many other artists have been profoundly influenced by the cross; and in turn they have strengthened Christianity by their wonderful paintings. Munkacsy's *Christ on Calvary* reproduces the Bible story of the crucifixion with dramatic power. It represents the Saviour at that moment when in half delirium he cries out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" His eyes are turned toward heaven.

Vividly the artist depicts the three groups of people against the threatening sky. The hard-hearted Caiaphas is still arguing and gesticulating. His companion is

quiet and troubled at the tragedy. A prominent member of the Sanhedrin is riding horseback, and as he looks back toward the cross, signs of satisfaction appear on his face. The little group of women that followed Jesus are at the foot of the cross. Jesus' mother is embracing his feet. The disciple John is standing at the right, hopeless and helpless. Students of the life of Jesus should spend time on these pictures, for they portray better than words the meaning of the scene and at the same time enable one to imagine the details. Over sixty famous artists have given the world their interpretations of this scene.

It would be a valuable lesson to list all the pieces of music that have been inspired by the cross—the oratorios, cantatas, anthems, and hymns. They would constitute a most impressive testimony to the power of Calvary. Who does not know:

“In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time”?

Stainer's Cantata *The Crucifixion* and Dubois' Meditation, *The Seven Last Words of Christ* are more powerful than great sermons. “Each Handel taxed himself for music sweet enough for his hymns of praise. . . . Architects taxed themselves to build cathedrals worthy of him whom the heaven of heavens could not contain. Painters vied with each other in creating seraphs and angels beautiful enough to adorn the walls of Christ's sanctuary. Sculptors went everywhere searching out marble white enough for Christ's forehead.”

5. Some Explanations of the Power of the Cross.

We instinctively look for a cause of changes that occur. What, then, changed the disciples from cowards

to heroes? What won the world? Paul says the cross. He also says the Resurrection, but the Resurrection was only the sequel to the scene on Golgotha.

The Fourth Gospel says: "And I, if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me. This he said signifying what death he should die" (John 12:32, 33). Several reasons have been given to explain the drawing power of the cross. (1) It was the greatest exhibition of self-sacrificing love that the world has ever seen. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Jesus taught that this great love was at the very centre of the world, that what he had done God would do. God was the Good Shepherd. At any cost he would go after the one lost lamb. No matter how sinful the prodigal, God would still love him and welcome him home. To show this to mankind Jesus was willing to endure shame and agony.

(2) The cross brings to men's consciousness the awfulness of sin. Men move along serenely unconscious of the terrible results of their low ideals. Suddenly their intemperance, or the hardness of their pride, ends in calamity and they are shocked into seeing the meaning of their sin. So Jesus' cross reveals the blackness of men's hearts, and sin can never again be accepted complacently.

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. Give the facts about the Crucifixion.
2. Two views about the location of Golgotha.
3. How was the Roman centurion affected by the scene?
4. How did the cross affect Paul's life?
5. Tell the story about Constantine's conversion.
6. Give examples of the use of the cross as a sacred symbol.
7. What influence has the cross had on art and music?

8. Describe Munkacsy's *Christ on Calvary*.
9. Two ways in which the cross has been a power in Christianity.

Oral Discussion

1. What incident made Simon of Cyrene remembered?
2. How does Luke differ from Mark in describing the thieves on the cross?
3. Name some hymns that were inspired by the cross.
4. What did Lowell mean when in his *Present Crisis* he wrote, "Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross that turns not back?"

Special Assignments

1. Describe the Via Dolorosa. See Baedeker's *Palestine and Syria*, 49-51.
2. Write the last seven words of Christ on the cross.
3. Read Herbert Gray's *The Christian Adventure*.

CHAPTER XXIV

VICTORY OVER DEATH

I Corinthians 15; Mark 16; Matthew 28; Luke 24; Acts 2: 22-36.

i. The Sudden Change in the Disciples.

No fact in human history is more certain than that the disciples were suddenly transformed from a hopeless, despondent, and scattered group to the hopeful, courageous men who went forth to establish the Christian Church. On Friday night Christ was in the tomb, and there was not a person on earth, so far as we can learn, that continued to believe in him as the Messiah. On Sunday Peter and the others were astonished to discover that Jesus was alive, and from that moment no obstacle or peril could keep them from preaching and teaching and establishing churches in the name of the living Christ.

Paul, the earliest writer on the Resurrection, makes this important statement: "I passed on to you what I had myself received, namely, that Christ died for our sins as the scriptures had said, and that he was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve; after that, he was seen by over five hundred brothers all at once, the majority of whom survive to this day, though some have died; after that, he was seen by James, then by all the apostles, and finally he was seen by myself" (I Corinthians 15: 3-8). Paul's experience is strong evidence that Jesus actually rose from the dead, either physically or spiritually. We cannot doubt that the tomb was

empty. The immediate establishment of Christianity is proof, if anything can be proven on this earth, of the essential fact of the Resurrection.

2. Substance of the Gospel Reports.

It is not surprising that in the excitement of that Sunday the disciples and the women should give different accounts of what happened. The first three Gospels tell many incidents, which may be summarized in the following brief statement. The two Marys and Salome came to the burial-place early Sunday morning and finding the tomb empty reported it to the disciples. Peter and John ran to see if their story was true, and found that the tomb was empty, as they had said. Peter and John told the rest of the disciples. Mary saw Jesus near the tomb. Jesus afterward appeared to Peter, to the two men who were going to Emmaus, and to the disciples in Jerusalem on the evening of the same day.

3. The Easter Message.

We do not know in what body Jesus rose, for Paul does not enable us to understand it fully; we only know that it was a spiritual body (I Corinthians 15:35-50). But we do know that death gave way to life, and because Jesus won this victory, we expect to have eternal life. This was the supreme test. The Buddha died and made death no easier; Zoroaster died and the valley of death was not illumined for those that followed; Mohammed died and added no hope to that which the world already had obtained from the Old Testament; Jesus was crucified as a result of his deliberate choice and he vanquished the power of the King of Terrors. Millions have said with Paul (I Corinthians 15:54, 55):

Death is swallowed up in victory,
O Grave, where is your victory?
O Death, where is your sting?

The victory is ours, thank God! He makes it ours by our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is a tendency on the part of modern writers to give up this great hope. An example of this is found in a poem by Sara Teasdale:

“But, oh, my frail immortal soul
That will not sleep forevermore,
A leaf borne onward by the blast,
A wave that never finds the shore!”

In contrast with this we may read the following verses by Whittier which well represent the attitude of Jesus toward the future life:

“So when Time’s veil shall fall asunder,
The soul may know
No fearful change, nor sudden wonder,
Nor sink the weight of mystery under,
But with the upward rise, and with the vastness grow.

And all we shrink from now may seem no new revealing;
Familiar as our childhood’s stream,
Or pleasant memory of a dream
The loved and cherished Past upon the new life stealing.

Serene and mild the untried light
May have its dawning;
And, as in summer’s northern night
The evening and the dawn unite,
The sunset hues of time blend with the soul’s new morning.”

It is the way that Jesus met death and the fact that he lived beyond death that has helped men meet the mysteries and tragedies of their own lives. What mankind needs is not simply the picture of a victorious life, but the power to multiply that kind of life. History is

dotted over with individuals who seemed almost ideal, but they died without multiplying their kind. One alone has lived the perfect life and also inspired millions upon millions to strive for the same.

4. Easter in Art.

Perhaps the most human of all the paintings of the Resurrection is Von Uhde's *Easter Morning*. A poorly dressed girl is standing by a tomb in the trees beside a solitary path. She is weeping bitterly. Christ appears and gently touches her arm to comfort her. He seems like a common man, though gentler and purer as he comforts her. It brings the risen Christ nearer to our thought because all the elaborate surroundings have disappeared, and there are no angels or persons that remind us of the apostles.

The most beautiful picture of the Resurrection is Ender's *Holy Women at the Tomb*. It shows the two Marys and Salome within the tomb where they have come to anoint the body of Christ. They find the body gone, and a young man dressed in white, an angel, who says to them, "He is not here, he is risen."

5. The Ascension.

In Luke (24: 50-53) and Acts (1: 9-11) are descriptions that fitly end the gospel story. From the Mount of Olives Jesus is taken up to heaven. It is necessarily presented to us inadequately, both in pictures and in literature. Men do not realize the spiritual truth unless it is clothed with physical form.

From heaven (Acts 2: 33 and John 14 and 16) the Holy Spirit descended on the believers, and gave them power to win the world to Christ. In a sense this com-

ing of the Spirit was the return of Christ. He became a presence walking with his followers every day. They could not see nor hear this presence with them, yet it was as real to them as the dearest earthly friend. Paul was able, almost to identify himself with this invisible Christ; "for me to live is Christ." To Saint Francis of Assisi he was more real and powerful than any human being could be. "To those who obey him, whether they be wise or simple, he will reveal himself, in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings, which they shall pass through in his fellowship, and, as an ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience who he is."

DIRECTIONS FOR STUDY

Written Work

1. What sudden change took place in the disciples?
2. Tell the story of Christ's walking with the two men toward Emmaus.
3. What testimony did Paul, the earliest New Testament writer, bear to the Resurrection?
4. What is the substance of the Gospel statements concerning the Resurrection?
5. What did Paul say concerning the resurrection body?
6. What difference in their influence on the belief in a future life is evident in the Buddha, Zoroaster, Mohammed, and Christ?
7. Describe the influence of the Resurrection on art and literature.
8. Tell the story of the ascension.
9. Give one evidence that the Holy Spirit came upon the followers of Christ.

Oral Discussion

1. Are the disagreements in the 'Gospels' story of the Resurrection necessarily evidences that the story is not true?
2. How do Matthew and Luke differ as to the place where Christ appeared after the Resurrection?
3. Do you think there were any persons among Jesus' followers who anticipated his rising from the grave?
4. Why is Paul's testimony convincing?

Special Assignments

1. Write a full description of the painting by Ender entitled *The Holy Women at the Tomb*.
2. Describe the scene in Acts 2 which shows the power Christ exerted after the Resurrection.
3. Write an essay on "Easter."
4. Read the poems on "The Eternal Value and Continuity of Life" in Merrifield's *Modern Religious Verse and Prose*.

APPENDIX I

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All of the pictures mentioned in this book may be obtained from the following publishers:

Perry Pictures Company, Malden, Mass.
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The New York Sunday-School Commission, 416 Lafayette Street, New York City.

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- Holy Women at the Tomb.*
- The Last Supper.*
- Sermon on the Mount.*
- Tribute Money.*
- Denial by Saint Peter.*

Teachers are advised to procure this group for each student. By using these pictures in connection with the text-book, much interest has been aroused in the classes conducted by the authors during the past seven years.

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